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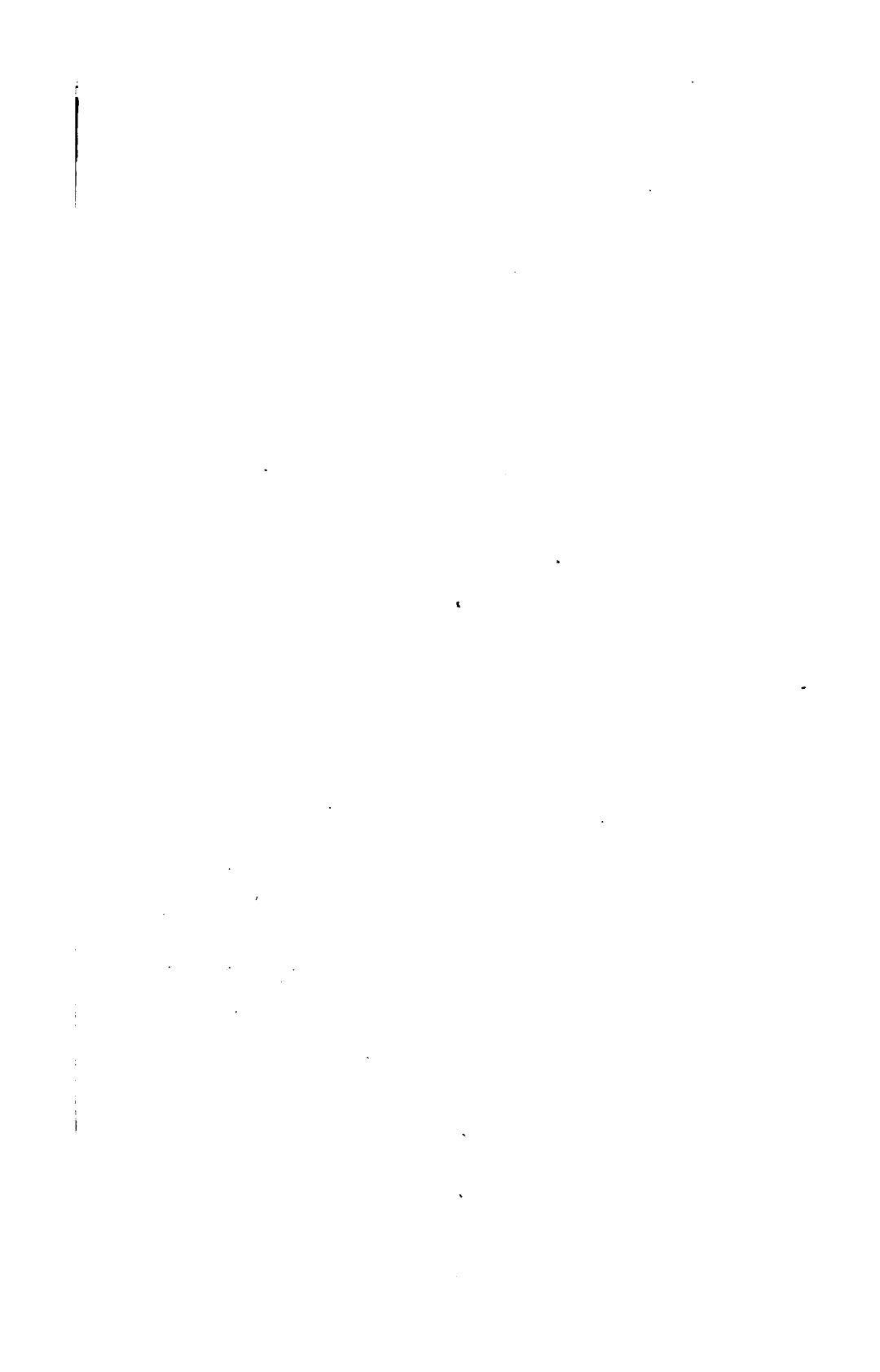




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# JESUIT EXECUTORSHIP:

OR,

PASSAGES IN THE LIFE

OF

A SECEDER FROM ROMANISM.

*An Autobiography.*

The net has fallen upon me; I shall perish  
Under device and practice.

SHAKESPEARE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



LONDON:

JOHN W. PARKER AND SON, WEST STRAND.

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THE following autobiography is that of a young and highly-gifted woman, struggling in the midst of Roman-catholic society, with her own almost spontaneous perception of the errors of the religion in which she has been born and educated.

Popery appears throughout in its undeniable character of a mental and social despotism, rather than in that of a spiritual power destructive to the soul. In this point of view, the pernicious character of Romanism is perhaps more apparent than it would be if exhibited in its deeper, more dangerous, but more mystic nature.

Any reader who may imagine that the principles and practices of Romanism are misstated in the narrative, is referred to the notes at the end of each volume.

EDITOR.



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# JESUIT EXECUTORSHIP.

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## CHAPTER I.

Ye household deities, whose guardian eye  
Mark'd each pure thought ere register'd on high,  
Still, still, ye walk the consecrated ground,  
And breathe the soul of inspiration round!

ROGERS.

AS an autobiographer is expected to say something of his birth, parentage, and education, I will begin my narrative with some particulars of mine, in the relation of which I shall endeavour to be brief.

My father and mother, who were Irish, were both Roman Catholics by hereditary descent; their families, for several generations, having been born in the Romish church.

My father, who inherited from his ancestors an ancient baronetcy, had two brothers. At the time of the opening of this narrative, the elder of the two was a barrister residing in London, where he had married an English Protestant heiress. The younger was a bishop in the Roman-catholic church, living in the neighbourhood of Cork.

My mother, the only daughter of an old Irish

family, of high descent, but of little hereditary property, had two brothers, who early in life had become adventurers for fame and fortune on the continent. Each had distinguished himself in his career; the one as a soldier, the other as a civilian. The elder of the two, the Baron de Wallenstein, resided in Vienna, and held high office under the Austrian government. The younger, the Count de Carryfort, lived in Paris, retired from his profession, and in possession of a competent fortune.

My father, Sir William Mulgrave, occupying an old ancestral castle near the Lakes of Killarney, with a beloved wife and four children, was for many years one of the happiest men in existence.

If it should be thought that want of foresight, or omission of calculation, undermined his fortune and destroyed his happiness, it must be recollected that he but resembled many of his countrymen, whose warm and generous natures seem formed for anything but self-preservation.

My father was, in truth, a genuine Irish gentleman of the 'olden times,' without his vices, but wedded, nevertheless, to the habits of his class and country; and being utterly unaware that the sordid changes going on in the world were encroaching, in hostile spirit, on his own domain, he perceived not the new position in which they placed him, and therefore never defended himself against their consequences.

Mulgrave Castle, the name of our residence, stood on a lofty eminence, commanding views of surpassing beauty. It was a building of extensive dimensions, exhibiting a variety of architecture, from the various modifications it had undergone in passing through a long line of possessors; who, it appeared, had not always adapted their amendments to the original character of the building. But though uniformity was wanting, and its lofty towers had dwindled to mere turrets, and its old fortress to mutilated crumbling stones, so as to make the name of castle a sort of misnomer, it had so striking a cast of reverend age about it as to give dignity to its decay, and render it captivating to the taste of the beholder, and dear to the hearts of the numerous peasantry of the demesne, who vied with each other in rehearsing legends of its former exploits and its ancient honours.

Our extensive park, rich in large and lofty trees, was an appropriate accessory to the castle and its luxuriant gardens. In the latter, owing to the mild climate of the south of Ireland, both flowers and fruits of the tenderest kinds flourished in the open air.

The traditions of our locality were as numerous as the birds that in summer months sang in its woods. As children, both my sisters and myself were not only infected with this lore, but deep in its mysteries. It was, indeed, a source of perennial

pleasure to us. We believed in fairies, and other similar beings, who participated with us the occupation of the castle, and glided, side by side, with us over the mountain tops, or through the silent glens of our wide domain. We were thus familiarized, as it were, with invisible things, and learned to recognise everywhere, sometimes with fluttering hearts, existences discernible only by the imaginative or the superstitious.

Our house had its haunted apartments, and I never crossed its spacious gothic hall, lighted but by a single lamp, on a winter's evening, but with a breathlessness not to be forgotten.

The mounting of the wide staircase was a still greater trial of fortitude, for there life-size saints and heroes stood in niches on its landings; and painted windows sometimes imparted appalling hues to the moonbeams that lit up their marble forms.

But even terror, if not intense, has charms for the volatile and wonder-loving nature of childhood; and as I recal the fleeting emotions—half-painful, half-pleasurable—inspired by its fancies and its fears, I feel a fondness for their memory, and a regret for the transitoriness of their existence. Charming chimeras! whither have ye all flown? Have ye no affinity with the care-worn heart? no mission from your dreamy world to a soul battling with the iron realities of life?

My father's fortune was large, his servants nume-

rous, and the hangers-on of the family innumerable. In addition to these were many peasant and pauper families, who, though not located within the limits of his domain, claimed and received from his bounty a constant supply of their ever-increasing wants.

As such charities had been, time immemorial, amongst the usages of the house, my father considered them as indispensable ; and their curtailment was never thought of, although the growing indolence of their recipients increased with the amount of his gifts.

There were also other drains on my father's revenues, quite as exhausting as those of charity. Of their united effects I shall have occasion to speak hereafter.

We had an old woman in the house, for many years, who had been my father's foster-mother. Her daughter, a remarkable character, even in childhood, had extorted from her foster-brother an education at a boarding-school, far superior to her condition, which had placed her in so false a position with all around her, as to make her, on her return to her mother at the completion of it, the torment of the house. It became, at length, necessary for the peace of the subordinate part of the household, to eject both her and her mother.

They were placed in a small cottage allotted them by my father, about four or five miles distant from the castle, just without the boundary of the park.

For some years after this, the juvenile part of our household, at least, lost sight of them. Meanwhile, they became a greater torment than ever to my father, upon whose generous disposition they well knew how to play. But of them no more at present.

My father was a man who possessed a thousand fine and interesting qualities, besides the unbounded benevolence of which I have spoken. He was not one of those boisterous country gentlemen, who are distinguished from the rustics around them by nothing but their superior garb and their despotic manners; for, though he relished field-sports, and loved the simplicity of a country life, he was a polished gentleman.

He possessed sterling integrity; and the lofty tone of his morals gave dignity even to the carriage of his person. A deeply-rooted principle of duty, which never allowed inclination to triumph over it, except in one single, though fatal point—*expenditure*—was the pervading spirit of his life; while high and generous feeling, amounting almost to the romantic, shed a brilliancy over his manners that rendered him captivating and irresistible, both in public and in private life.

He was accustomed to enter, with the ardour and the relish of youth, into the occupations and pursuits of his children, taking the lead in their amusements, and superintending their studies. How could they

help doting on such a father? He was at once the head and the idol of the house.

My mother's character was one of harmony and sweetness. Without possessing any brilliant qualities, the equanimity of her temper, and the consistency of her deportment, rendered her as much an object of attachment in her own sphere as my father was in his. She possessed both cultivation and taste, but she entertained so exalted an opinion of her husband, that it was her pleasure to yield to him every questioned point ; so that her wishes and her will seemed ever in unison with his.

My sisters and I had for some years been under the tuition of an English governess, a Miss White, who had been educated in a convent in France, and was considered highly accomplished in 'French, music, dancing, and drawing.'

My brother's tutor, who was also English, was a Mr. Rivers, who, unusual as it may seem in a Catholic family, was a Protestant, and an M.A. of Oxford. It was part of his duty to assist Miss White in instructing my sisters and myself in the solid parts of our education.

During the winter we lived as a family, very much apart from the society of our neighbourhood, owing to there being but few residents of our church and class within visiting distance.

The tenour of our life, at this season, was therefore uniform, but never dull. My sisters and myself had



been early trained to horsemanship, and we rode constantly, and became so much inured to the vicissitudes of weather as not to be affected by them.

We partook, with my father and brother, of every out-door amusement, except the chase. Sometimes we skated on waters found on the summits of the neighbouring mountains, or chased each other up their rocky acclivities with the swiftness of deer. When the weather was too severe to be braved, we had resources within doors which kept us always occupied.

Not the least of these was music, for which some of us had a decided talent, and which, cultivated by Miss White, might have enabled us to attain excellence. But our ambition, in this particular, did not lead us to do more than just enough to satisfy our parents and amuse ourselves. Large and echoing apartments reverberated our duets and trios, while their columned recesses gave back our choruses in redoubled sound. Not unfrequently we passed from music to dancing; then

Chased the slipper by the sound,  
Or turn'd the blindfold hero round and round.

Had all this failed, by repetition, to keep *ennui* out of our circle, we had still another and different excitement, in the dissensions which occasionally occurred betwixt our governess and tutor, in the school-room, on the most important of all subjects, —religion.

I do not mean to insinuate that their discussions on this point extended their influence to the general household, although they frequently disturbed the drawing-room.

Mr. Rivers was a learned and conscientious Protestant, between thirty and forty, much valued in our family for his gentlemanly, consistent, and un-prose-lyting deportment.

He well knew that the priest, who resided in the family, was the teacher of its religion; and therefore never meddled with what belonged exclusively to his department. But while he was rigidly negative on this point, he was scrupulous in avoiding all conformity to our faith and forms. Nevertheless, his sense of duty to the office he held, as tutor to the heir of a Catholic family, induced him to abstain from adopting any course of reading with him, on any subject how remotely so ever connected with religion, until he had submitted it to my father.

He was equally exact in his choice of books for my sisters and myself; which, however, were always objected to by Miss White, whatever they might be.

But having once obtained my father's sanction to those of his choice, Mr. Rivers strictly defended their adoption.

Miss White, who, as a rigid Catholic, was very much confined in her acquaintance with literature, considered that a general knowledge, or even a smattering of it, was but a burden to the female mind, or

a temptation to pursuits which might lead a woman out of the sphere of her duties. She therefore reprobated the idea of a young lady's poring over *folios* or *quartos*, as she was pleased to call all books larger than a small octavo, which had not been sanctioned by the household priest, whom she considered as the church's exponent of what ought to be our intellectual, as well as our moral and religious training.

In reading general history, therefore, she took no part with us; and ecclesiastical history she considered perfectly intolerable, as it caused us to ask questions not only repugnant to her faith, but beyond the sphere of her information.

Mr. Rivers never argued with her on a settled point, yet he patiently listened to her oft-repeated objections to his plans, and when new ones were made, stated them to my father; while she appealed to my mother, who, on her part, referred again to my father, whose decision she never attempted to influence.

My father was a man of varied information, who, being naturally humane and benevolent, could not entertain with any degree of heartiness the exclusive and intolerant principles of Romanism. He was therefore perpetually sinning against its spirit, and ever breaking through the trammels which circumscribed his social feelings, although, for the sake of external consistency, as the head of a family, he adhered to the forms of his hereditary faith.

This dubiousness of mind rendered him indifferent, where he would otherwise have been zealous, and caused him to leave his children to the chance training of antagonist teachers, without inquiring into the probable consequences of such a course on their religious belief, or into the fitness or unfitness of his hereditary faith for promoting the interests of an immortal life. His entire freedom, however, from the intolerance of his church was, no doubt, of immense importance to his children, as the liberty which it afforded to them in their first crude efforts of thought, as well as in their expression of it, must have greatly aided the development of those faculties which it is so much the object of education to unfold. My father allowed himself to read argumentative works, and even bitter censures, on the practices of his church, the spirit of which would sometimes show itself in his conversation; so that whatever reverence might have been enjoined by Miss White, or the priest, for certain forms imposed on us, was undermined, if not destroyed, by my father's wit, in descanting on their absurdity. With a laxity of feeling towards his church such as this, my father no doubt felt it difficult to maintain consistency in the control he was disposed to exercise over his children's education.

But as he became more acquainted with Mr. Rivers, his confidence in his good taste, as well as in his integrity, induced him to place in his hands an unlimited discretion in the choice of our books, with

only one exception : that exception was the Bible.\* He was, he remarked, in the habit of reading this sacred book himself ; but it was too strictly forbidden by the church for him to venture on the open use of it, by allowing it to his children.

It was impossible for Miss White to acquiesce in an arrangement which placed so much power in Mr. Rivers' hands without an attempt to neutralize it, which she endeavoured to do, by proposing that the priest should have a veto in the selection of our books. Her effort was vain ; and we were thenceforth amply supplied with books of Mr. Rivers' choice.

My second sister, Caroline, was Miss White's favourite pupil, her cast of character and her peculiar tastes alike rendering her an easy prey to the superstitions of our church and the bigotry of our government. Caroline was continually being held up to Dora, the elder of our trio, and myself as our model in all things, but especially in the negations of her mind, and acquirements ; while she herself, naturally kind and diffident, shrank from the priority thus forced on her, and only caressed us the more when Miss White censured us by comparisons with herself. So that although our intercourses of thought with her were somewhat restricted by her limited range of mind and pursuits, our sisterly affection was never impaired by it.

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\* Note 1.

My brother, named after my father, William, was a very eccentric character, who, with a less efficient tutor than Mr. Rivers, must have passed through the period of youth without even ordinary acquirements. As it was, those he had made were much below par, and his tastes unsuitable to his position. Although every allowable gratification was afforded him in the domestic circle, his inclination led him to the society of the stable rather than to that of the drawing-room. My father's anxieties respecting him were endless; and he wearied himself in vain to discover in him any bias of mind that might be trained to his advantage.

My father's brother, the bishop, who lived about twenty miles from us, was a frequent visitor at our house. He was a tall man, of a dignified deportment, ordinarily reserved and meditative; but a vigilant observer of all that was passing around him.

He was fond of the style and gaiety of my father's house, and on particular occasions, when distinguished guests were there, he regaled us with a full display of the pomp of the diocesan. At such times, I always felt afraid of him; but when he chose to come to us in a private capacity, with a single servant, and without the parade which he thought necessary at other times, he demeaned himself with so much kindness and familiarity, that we forgot the bishop in the affectionate uncle.

It was not often that he seemed enough at ease

to make himself agreeable ; for his spirit was restless, and although the distinction which the mitre had conferred on him was immeasurably gratifying, he was galled, like all his spiritual brethren of his rank, at not being invested, by society at large, with the titular honours of his position.

The disturbed state of the Catholic mind throughout the country, at that period, no doubt contributed to increase my uncle's irritation under his own peculiar privations, and to render him a stern claimant for the removal of those disabilities which limited his ambition and restricted the exercise of his zeal. The discussions that sometimes arose at my father's table on this subject were not always conducted with moderation, especially if carried on with a Protestant disputant.

Mr. Rivers was an acute reasoner, but he never allowed himself to be drawn out in opposition to my uncle, if it was at all avoidable ; as there existed between them a coldness, amounting almost to antipathy.

On the part of my uncle, this might have been caused by Mr. Rivers' omission, when addressing him, of the titles, which he himself considered due to him. Or, it might have been owing to the exclusive spirit of his own religious creed, as the very name of Protestant was repugnant to him ; and he sometimes even descended to vent the bitterness of his dislike to it in denunciations little short of anathemas.

My father, who was mischievously fond of an extravagance that was ridiculous, would on such occasions slyly prompt the assailant to the very verge of danger, and then step in, at the critical moment, to prevent a catastrophe.

Of my father's habitual licence in expressing opinions not in accordance with our church, my uncle never appeared to take any notice; neither did he seem at all cognizant of what I may call a singular omission of duty in our household priest, in not requiring the younger branches of the family occasionally to attend the confessional.

Miss White made it a subject of constant remonstrance with us; but as neither my father nor the priest had ever exhorted us to it, after the event of our first communion, we continued to live without even any precise idea of what were the ordinary requirements of the confessional.

Reflecting on this anomaly at this distance of time, I attribute it to the extreme anxiety of my father to keep our minds as long as possible in a state of purity; and from the same cause we were never put in possession of any of those Romish *Manuals of Devotion*, or *Daily Companions*, which are provided, as it would seem, to initiate the young in a knowledge of every possible sin.

The usual system of domestic tuition amongst Roman Catholics is unfavourable to the development of the intellect, and still more so to the moral powers;



everything offered to the mind being presented under false aspects, or in such mutilated and fragmentary portions as to mock and deteriorate the faculties they pretend to improve.

As to our religious training, if the expression be not a misnomer, it prepared us for nothing but an aptitude in performing aves, reciting pater-nosters, or carefully counting the beads of our rosaries.

Beyond what is implied in these requirements, and the incessant commands of the priest to 'pay all homage to the Virgin,' we were taught nothing of God.

Neither Miss White's manners, nor the spirit of her counsels, invited to confidence. Yet I sometimes spoke to her of what I felt to be the emptiness of my religious acquirements, and their insufficiency to satisfy the longings of the soul. Sometimes she laughed at my complaints; at others, when in a captious mood, she would say she wondered that something much worse had not happened to me, since I never relieved my heart of its transgressions by confession to the priest.

After some time, as this sarcasm had been often repeated, it led to distrust and self-reproach, and I mentioned the subject to my father, who said he would consider of it.

Had that prohibited book, which my father had not nerve enough to bestow on us in defiance of his church, been at this time permitted to me, I should have learnt from its pages the requirements of its

Divine author, and rested in hope on its blessed provisions for time and eternity. They who have been in childhood carefully instructed in a knowledge of this book, can form no idea of the vacuum which unacquaintance with its revelations leaves in an otherwise instructed mind. Wherever it is prohibited, there ought also, in common mercy, to be a prohibition of other books; for reading, as it exercises the faculties, leads to a knowledge of ourselves; and the wants of our nature, which is ever panting after some undefined good, that it never attains until it acquaints itself with God, and is at peace with Him.

When my father again spoke to me of *confession*, he expressed surprise at what I could have to confess. 'So good a little girl as you, Helen, ought not to have any cause for confession.'

'But I am unhappy, papa!'

'*Unhappy*, my child! Do not let me hear such words again. You must be jesting!'

'No, papa.'

'Come, then, confess to me. I will undertake to advise you, instead of the good father, who I am sure could not understand your little heart as well as I can.'

'Ah, dear papa! perhaps I am unlike other people. I have fancies and forgetfulnesses which distress me. My pater-nosters do not interest me, and I often unintentionally omit them; and when I am

addressing salutations to the Virgin, I want to know why I should do so. It is not that I am reluctant to adore the *Divine Being*, who, I know, must exist somewhere, for I behold this beautiful world, which everywhere speaks of him, by day and by night.'

'Well, Nelly—what next?'

'I want to know more of God, and what he requires of me. I cannot believe in the Virgin, although she is called the Mother of God, and is said to have more influence in heaven than her divine Son, our blessed Saviour. In many of the books which I have read, I find invisible worlds and things treated so differently from what they are treated in the extracts from 'the Fathers,' and 'legends of the church,' to which we are ordinarily restricted in our religious readings, that I have a feeling of doubt and uncertainty about every religious obligation imposed on me. This is my confession, papa. And now that I have made it to you, you, perhaps, can tell me what penances I ought to perform, to relieve myself of that sense of wrong which depresses my spirits.'

My father did not reply instantly, but took several turns in the room before he said,—

'Nelly, my love, a sceptical turn of mind is a fearful evil in the female character, and especially in a young heart. I am afraid I must make you over to the good priest, after all, lest I should add to the wrong I have already committed, in allowing you an

enlightenment of mind incompatible with the passive faith required of you by the church. I do not wish you to have recourse to what is ordinarily called confession, but I advise you to converse with Father Ossory. State your difficulties to him; he may be able to obviate them. Not but that I think you are perhaps more whimsical than sceptical,—at least, I ought to hope so, unless I could supply you with a better faith than that in which you have been brought up. I will speak to the priest, Nelly, and tell him to think of you only as an innocent, but rather wayward child, who, seeing something beyond its reach—the moon, for instance—cries to obtain it.’

Although my father said this in the most playful manner imaginable, I was so much hurt at having opened my heart in vain, since I had not made him sensible of the reality of my distress, that I burst into tears.

He took me in his arms, and caressed me tenderly, until a tap at the door of the room impelled me hastily to repress my tears. My mother entered.

‘My dear Dora,’ said my father, ‘here is a penitent child of yours, who accuses herself of wrong without having erred, and would fain receive chastisement without deserving it. Take her into your own keeping, and instruct her in her duty to herself.’

My mother was the gentlest and kindest of human beings, but she was scarcely competent to the task enjoined on her, because she never presumed to

think for herself on any point of religious belief or practice. She was accustomed to cast herself wholly on her spiritual adviser, as undoubtingly as if he had been an inspired or superhuman being.

Although left alone with my mother, being fully aware of her repugnance to speak at all on the subject of religion, I could not find courage to open my heart to her as I had done to my father; and I stood in silence, awaiting her inquiries.

But as if she had known what was passing in my mind, she said,—

‘I fear, my love, I should prove but a poor adviser to you. Had you not better consult Father Ossory?’

I thankfully replied,—‘Certainly, mamma, if you wish me;’ and escaped hastily from her presence.

Let not my reader suspect my mother of indifference or unkindness. It is only necessary to recollect the spiritual domination under which she lived, to account for her fear of acting without authority in a case which she suspected to belong exclusively to the confessional.

## CHAPTER II.

Where there is strength of understanding, the mind can never long remain in a negative state; that is, it cannot continue in not comprehending, in not believing, and yet in tolerating, what it disdains.—DE STAEL.

MY father's manner of living was a perfect specimen of that hospitality of past times, which is now scarcely to be met with anywhere, and rendered his house a place of chosen resort to numerous friends and relations, as well as to many incidental visitors, who, in summer months, were attracted to our neighbourhood by the far-famed beauties of its Lakes.

Thus our very locality, though so distant from the metropolis as to exclude us from the advantages of its refined society, frequently brought us into intercourse with enlightened persons from every part of Great Britain; and not unfrequently with foreigners.

It often happened, during three or four of the summer months, that the number of our guests daily amounted to fifteen or twenty persons.

As school-girls, who had daily indispensable duties to perform, my sisters and myself saw but little of these guests, although we sometimes joined them in

the drawing-room after dinner. But the few hours then passed amongst strangers of various appearance and opinions, became a source of information and improvement inconceivably gratifying to our whole trio. The faces we scanned, the remarks we heard, and the manners we criticised, constantly furnished us with new ideas, and endless subjects of remark amongst ourselves, in our own room.

This contemporary world became even more amusing than the departed generations of history, whose pages we ransacked for resemblances to the characters around us.

Yet it was difficult for us to imagine it possible that we were living amongst heroes; for a great man is no more a hero to a child than to his valet de chambre.

Nevertheless, there were, at that time, many in our circle who had performed, and others who were destined to perform, distinguished parts in the service of their country.

For two years after this, the affairs of our family went on as heretofore; guests and gaiety in summer, and quiet domestic life, with the customary out-door exercises, in the other seasons of the year.

We had reached July, 1815. My brother, the elder of the family, was within eighteen months of his majority, to which we were all looking forward, as to an epoch in our family history.

My sister Dora was eighteen, Caroline seventeen, and myself nearly sixteen.

The whole of Europe, during the greater part of this eventful year, was kept in unceasing agitation by the overturnings of kingdoms, and shiftings of crowns, consequent on the return of Buonaparte from Elba.

Even our remote locality was affected by that event. Great numbers of continentalists had taken refuge in England from the tempest of revolution. Some of these had reached as far as our unhappy, and always agitated, Ireland.

It was not until this period, when our school-studies were ended, and we were considered as beginning to perform something like a part in life, that my sisters and myself were allowed to read newspapers.

Our introduction to this species of reading was the commencement of a new era in our existence. Hitherto our external world had been comprised within our own domain, and its adjacent neighbourhood. Our school books had, indeed, instructed us in the geographical varieties of the globe, and history had related to us the peculiarities of its different races; but in the immaturity of age and of mind which precedes the actual experience of life, we never realize the historical statements of books. The history of this conqueror, or that monarch, or



any other personage of past times, is but the outline of an ideality—neither visible nor tangible; and the locality of his existence, or the sphere of his achievements, is equally a sort of abstraction, which eludes recognition.

But newspapers! What living, animating teachers did we find these to be! Their records of contemporary persons and occurrences were of surpassing interest, and we began very soon to feel that we belonged to a real world, and that we had a real part to perform in it. We seemed to have attained at once the power of discerning ‘good and evil.’ With what eager interest did we run over their long columns of many-coloured thought and fact—from great to little, and from grave to gay. On another page, its several advertisements, disclosing so many wants, and offering so many boons, betrayed the private embarrassments, or the sordid schemes of adventurers on social sympathy or inexperienced credulity. With what insinuating courtesy does one petitioner ask for the reader’s purse, and another for his patronage, until the heart of the young novice aches, and deplores his incompetency to comply with such painful and urgent requests. All this, and much more than this, came daily on its broad sheet from the great metropolis to our remote abode, to supply the awakened intellects and satisfy the ardent curiosity of its charmed and enthusiastic readers.

But young people have a world of their own, and do not go far for the visions of bliss which inexperience and fancy create around them.

The two years just passed had done much towards suppressing my complaints of the meagre information imparted to me on religious subjects. I had been disciplined by the priest and the governess into complete subjection to the externals of our faith, which I had learned to practise with unremitting effort, although without deriving any satisfaction from the performance; except, indeed, the consciousness of obedience to those in spiritual authority over me.

My father, alarmed at what he had deemed the sceptical tendency of mind which I had once exhibited, and which he—influenced by Miss White—had attributed to the ‘folios and quartos’ in such young hands—with more meaning than his jest implied, exclaimed, with Festus, ‘Much learning doth make thee mad!’ Our reading had therefore been restricted, and the library became a prohibited resort, for which the confessional formed a substitute, and was pressed on us with a frequency which seemed intended to repair the loss sustained by former omissions.

On my own part, it was only submitted to as a duty not to be evaded. And now, after years of experience and reflection on this essential part of the Romish system, I am convinced that the confessional,

as ordinarily used, is the very nursery of sin, and one of the great engines of Satan for the destruction of the soul. That my sisters and myself escaped its depravity and its pollutions, was owing not only to my father's influence with our household priest, but also to the personal character of Father Ossory himself.

He was a man who, at this distance of time and with essentially altered views both of his church and his office, I designate a man of purity and of goodness, so far as these qualities can exist founded on unscriptural views of religious truth.

In appearance he realized the very *beau ideal* of a Christian. His lofty open forehead, pale and placid, on which intelligence and truth seemed to have engraven themselves in characters not to be mistaken, in conjunction with his other fine features, formed an harmonious whole that was irresistible in inspiring confidence both in his superior intellect and sincere piety. To these endowments were added those chastening touches which time alone bestows on character, and that tranquil grace of deportment which real humility can alone impart. He had attained, at the period of which I am speaking, his seventy-fifth year. He belonged to that generation of Irish priests which has now entirely passed away. They were for the greater part men of good birth, thorough learning, and superior knowledge of men and things; while their manners, formed in the best

society of the continent, were at once simple and refined.

Of course, in speaking of any class of men, we must always be aware of the individual exceptions in it, which so often bring reproach and disgrace on the whole.

Of Father Ossory, in the latter part of his life, I shall, hereafter, be able to speak as of one whom the 'truth had made free;' and to whom it was given to know 'the mysteries of the kingdom of God.' And although we cannot but regret that men resembling him, such as Massillon and Fenélon, should have taught 'for doctrines the commandments of men,' and lived and died in an apostate church, unconvinced of its errors, may we not hope that blindness only in part pertained to them, and that they were yet made meet for that acceptance with God, which is granted to every one who 'feareth Him, and worketh righteousness?'

Yet it appears to me that it can only be in ignorance or in oversight that any honest or intelligent mind can teach the demoralizing practices, the absurd deceits, and the criminal intolerance of the Romish church. That it is possible to have been born in that church, and to live in ignorance of its essential nature and doctrines, under the direction of a skilful or harmless priest, my dear mother was one of many thousand instances.

My sister Dora had a keen perception of the

absurdity of some of the tenets she was taught, but she discerned only their absurdity. She saw not the intolerance of her church, for it had never been unveiled to her—and she knew nothing of its immoralities, because they had been carefully hidden from her. I may make the same remark of Caroline and myself; with this difference, that, owing to certain gleams of light which broke occasionally on the darkness of my own mind, I became earlier aware of some deplorable deficiency, of which I saw neither the cause nor the extent, in the teaching which I received.

The contempt I sometimes felt for the empty forms of duty imposed on me, produced indifference to the performance of them; for the sin of which I wept and humbled myself, without applying to the priest. But I had it all to go over again in the confessional, where *penance*—not *repentance*—was the absolving condition of pardon, from him who was the dispenser, in his own name, of that which is solely the gift of God.

It was the shadowy discernment of something beyond the priest, beyond the form, beyond my own reach, that left me anxious and dissatisfied, under almost every effort of duty, but especially under that which I was compelled to offer to the divinities of the Saints' Calendar. The painted canvas, and the chiselled marble, though exciting as works of art and delineations of beauty, revolted me as objects of worship, even when I knelt before them.

How could peace dwell in the mind thus at war with its own perceptions of what was rational, and with its aspirations after what was imaged in the depths of the soul as the only 'high and lofty One' to whom its homage should be paid?

The teaching of newspapers, with their thousand themes, though not comprising forms of faith or principles of religion, was nevertheless, as a pre-eminent awakener of the faculties and a creator of opinion, one of the instruments by which my sometimes slumbering anxieties were at this time revived and quickened to intensity.

Time was when I had been permitted to 'sit deep in volumes;' and although that time was short, I had plucked from it immortal fruit, which had opened my eyes to things beyond the ken of sense.

When the light of books was withdrawn, I learnt to listen, as I did not read; for though the spirit of inquiry had been silenced, it was impossible that I could wholly suppress the aspirations which still occasionally swelled my heart. My father's lightest thoughts—uttered in dinner talk, or Mr. Rivers' temperate refutation of the bishop's dogmas—alternately kindled and quenched the habitual longing of my soul for the knowledge which had been placed out of my reach by the prohibition of books.

A note, which was brought by a foreign servant, one fine morning in August, and which was instantly handed round our private circle, became in its con-

sequences, of immense importance to my after life. It was from my Aunt Mulgrave, introducing to my father a young French marquis, who had been for some weeks her own guest. The note was inclosed in one from the marquis, acquainting my father that he intended himself the honour of paying his personal respects to him on the following day. Almost at the same moment, a letter was brought from my aunt, by post, apologizing to my father for intruding on him an additional guest, at a season when she knew his house to be always full.

‘But you will, I am sure,’ she wrote, ‘pardon me, when you see my young friend, who, besides his personal attractions, is at present in deep grief for the loss of his mother, an intimate friend of mine, very lately deceased. Change of scene, and the mild air of Ireland, in your house, cannot, I trust, fail to recruit him, although his depression is at present so great as materially to affect his health.

‘Were he not a Protestant, as well as myself, how much could I write in his praise; and how certain should I be of his finding favour with your whole house. As he is, I do but commend him to your ordinary courtesy: which I know, however, will comprise, as it always does, everything that is benignant and kind.’

At the time of the arrival of these missives, we were a little family knot, assembled in my father’s private library, as we were wont to be every morning

after breakfast, to read letters or newspapers, and arrange the movements of the day.

My mother was charmed with my aunt's letter, and expressed great interest in our expected visitor, on account of the amiability indicated by a deep grief for the loss of a mother.

The bishop, when he heard of the expected arrival of a French Protestant, was visibly disturbed; and as my mother continued to speak of him with interest, he turned short round on her, and said,—

‘Do you know, sister, that this young man, with whom you sympathize so strongly, is not only a Protestant, but an apostate; since, as a Frenchman of rank, he must have been born in the holy Catholic church?’

My mother replied, meekly, that she had no particular partiality for a Protestant, as such, and still less for an apostate, although she did not know that she was prohibited from interesting herself in the welfare of an amiable man, though he were a Protestant. ‘At any rate,’ she added, ‘my sister's introduction must not be slighted.’

‘Lady Mulgrave,’ said my uncle, in a slow and authoritative manner, ‘toleration of heretics, under any circumstances, is a sin of the deepest dye, in one who has been born in the true church, and by the help of the blessed Virgin has remained steadfast to it, whose laws and whose denunciations are alike infallible. I have no natural cruelty about my dispo-



sition ; but our holy religion conquers nature, and I cannot forbear to rejoice at the destruction of any enemy of God, let me find him wheresoever I may ; for so our church denominates all who are not within her pale, whether ‘ Greek or Jew, bond or free.’

My mother made no reply, but, crossing herself, glanced at Mr. Rivers, and changed the subject.

We were so much accustomed to similar outbreaks on the part of my uncle, that we perhaps considered them, as he appeared to do, only as an official demonstration indispensable to the mitre.

I sometimes felt surprised that his bitterness did not move my father ; but he always appeared deaf on such occasions, and no other in our circle was privileged to rebel against it.

My aunt’s introduction of the young Marquis de Grammont had disposed of us all—except, perhaps, my uncle—to greet him cordially on his arrival. But after having seen him, we were at a loss to express the kind of feeling he inspired. His fine features and figure, although striking, were so much surpassed by the grace of his expression, and the captivating manner of his salutation, that no ordinary expression of approbation could do justice to the impression which he made on us. ‘ But he is French,’ we exclaimed, ‘ and that accounts for both his ease and his grace. Still, there was something more than *French* about him. There were lines of thought and traces of sorrow on his face, and in his

almost lustreless eye, penetrating and intelligent as was its expression.

Yet there was no abstraction of manner, no effort to interest us in those feelings inseparable from the calamity which his deep mourning announced.

His conversation and his deportment altogether were as free from consciousness of himself as if he had been entirely destitute of the self-love common to our nature; and having been introduced, in my father's most cordial manner, to the family circle, he became at once one of ourselves.

He was about twenty-five years of age, and having been born in the most disastrous year of the first French revolution, had been trained, like many others of his countrymen, in the school of vicissitude and adversity, and had derived from its severe discipline that extensive knowledge of human nature and of the world which, while it places a young man in advance of himself, unites experience with youth, and gives him, in the intercourses of life, an influence peculiar and decided.

At the time of the Marquis de Grammont's introduction to my father's house, he was in possession of extensive estates, which had been for the greater part of his early years sequestered from his family.

His father and mother were both dead, and he was without brother or sister. When he was sufficiently acquainted with us to speak of his parents, he drew many tears by his affecting and impas-

sioned delineation of the fine qualities which they had displayed, especially his mother, in the varying fortunes of their lives.

We were not prepared, before his arrival, to hear him speak English like a native, and had anticipated that it would be necessary to 'rub up' our *French*, as we had often been obliged to do on similar occasions. But it was a cause of congratulation amongst us that it was not wanted; for with whatever effort persons may drill themselves in the continental languages under domestic teachers, they never speak with ease to themselves until they practise them amongst native speakers in their own land.

I had always been accustomed, as the younger and pet child of my father, to sit at his right hand at dinner; and as Monsieur de Grammont handed me into the dining-room on the first day of his arrival, my father beckoned us to his side.

I was glad to find the heretic marquis at so great a distance from the bishop; who, sitting by my mother, at the upper end of the table, was eyeing him down the whole length of it with no friendly glance.

My father was an experienced and an animating host, and knew how to draw out every variety of character around him. On this occasion I was happy enough to hear the marquis talk without talking myself.

I was, indeed, in no mood for conversation. The

idea that one so lately doomed, in the name of the church, to endless misery in a future world, was sitting by my side, filled me with the most poignant sensations of regret and pity. All perception of the right or wrong of the denunciation was beyond my ken. But as this victim of the church's intolerance, unconscious of the doom that had been pronounced on him, conversed frankly with my father, I could not but discern in their opinions and feelings something of kindred sense and goodness. I longed to learn what the marquis himself could say in defence of that atrocious heresy by which the attribute of immortality, bestowed on man by the Divine Creator for the highest and most beneficent purpose, became to him an eternal woe.

But this was not a subject that could be introduced in such a place, even had I felt courage enough to volunteer a thought of any kind to a gentleman so much a stranger to me.

A wild idea of making an attempt, at some future time, to snatch him from his fate, by bringing him into the fold of the church, passed through my brain, as I sat in silence by his side.

Yet what could *I* say to influence or enlighten a mind such as his?

As the ladies rose from table, Monsieur de Grammont rose with them, and having conducted me to the drawing-room, left me there.

Miss White was amongst the ladies, and very

soon at my side, expressing a hope that the handsome Frenchman had not been initiating me in Protestantism; to which, she said, she feared I was naturally addicted.

‘If you were not too young to converse at all with him, it would be your duty to endeavour to convert him from his errors. As you are, it would be better you should avoid him.’

‘Perhaps,’ said I, ‘you would transfer the duty to Dora.’

‘No; I do not think either of you to be trusted with him; and Caroline is too diffident and too humble for such an adventure.’

While she was speaking, Monsieur de Grammont returned, and immediately joined my two sisters, who were sitting together in a distant part of the room.

They were both handsome at all times, but on this day I thought they were unusually so. Dora was a brunette, and Caroline a blonde. I observed, from Dora’s subdued vivacity as the marquis approached her, that she recollected his recent bereavement. As this thought expressed itself on her countenance, it evidently caused a sort of hesitation at the commencement of their discourse, which, however, soon passed away.

When the gentlemen came up from the dining-room, they began, *en masse*, to rally Monsieur de Grammont on his running from table with the ladies.

His replies showed him to be no novice in convivial banter; and although he was evidently not in tune for the raciness of Irish wit, he failed not to acquit himself in spirited repartee.

## CHAPTER III.

Has thy heart sickened with deferred hope ?  
 Or felt the impatient anguish of suspense ?  
 Or hast thou tasted of the bitter cup  
 Which Disappointment's withered hands dispense.  
 MRS. TIGHE.

**D**URING the ensuing fortnight we all became attached to Monsieur de Grammont in no ordinary degree. He was a character who bore close acquaintance well. Frank, manly, and sincere, from principle as well as from disposition, the more we saw of him the more we liked him.

He would have been a dangerous person amongst so many inexperienced female hearts, had not the feeling which, as a heretic, he inspired, caused a perpetual effort to avoid too close an intimacy with him.

This prejudice created an effectual barrier to that reciprocation of sentiment and confidence which wins and rivets the affections.

The bishop had stayed with us but two days after Monsieur de Grammont's arrival, and therefore had seen but little of him ; yet he left behind him a sting in almost every breast, infused by his mystic warnings, which could not but work him harm.

Even my father and mother were infected with his demoniac zeal for their church, and a consequent hostility of feeling for one so decidedly adverse to it as our guest.

After Monsieur de Grammont's first week with us, he devoted himself entirely to inform and entertain *me*. No doubt, as the younger of the family, and too young to be dangerous, I had often before this been an object of attention to other gentlemen of our circle.

Monsieur de Grammont's seeming preference did not, therefore, move me. Unacquainted with my own heart, and with human nature, I saw no danger in an intercourse which became every day more and more delightful.

Léonce, for by that name the marquis had taught me to call him, found endless subjects of conversation; on which he imparted so much information, that I had a deep delight in listening to him.

As I became more familiar with him, I one day introduced the almost interdicted subject between us, of our two faiths, with a view to rescue him, if possible, from the dreadful consequences of being left without the pale of the Romish church. No sooner was this subject broached, and I had heard Léonce's reply to my earnest exhortations, than I saw the extreme arrogance and presumption of my attempt, blind and ignorant as I was, to lead him into truth.

I was at once convinced that I must discipline my



understanding, and greatly enlarge the sphere of my information, before I again attempted to speak to him on a subject of which *he* knew so much and *I* so little.

But though I had no power to shake Léonce's faith, I soon found that it was very easy to perplex me in mine, especially as I was more of an actor than a believer in the religion I had been taught. I had, in fact, no foundation of faith. I scarcely knew what I believed. Only a vague notion of being exclusively in the right gave birth to the arrogance of attempting to convert another to what I fancied I believed.

As a family, religion had never been a primary object amongst us ; and my readers have already seen with what a wavering faith I performed the external requirements of our church. The priest and his offices were all that was real in the ceremonies prescribed to me ; while he himself stood betwixt my soul and God, for he taught me to believe the Supreme Being unapproachable but through him as a medium.

I was thus removed far away from Him ' whom to know aright is life eternal !'

Léonce, as he spoke on this most important subject, opened a new world of thought and opinion to me, in language so lucid and so simple that I received impressions of divine truth which became ineffaceable.

He did not offer me his Bible, but, in the confi-

dential discourses we held, I had inquired respecting that book.

I told him of my father's prohibition of it, in conformity with the requirements of the church and the priest; and he recommended me to get the prohibition, if possible, withdrawn.

Though hopeless of success, I followed his advice, and to my great surprise and joy, obtained the loan of a Bible from my father.

I had many times before seen the exterior of this blessed book, for Mary, my own maid, who had been sent to me from England by my aunt Mulgrave, was a Protestant, and in the habit of keeping it on her bedroom table. But she would have been promptly dismissed had she presumed to lend it to any of us; and, knowing this, I never placed her in peril by requesting it.

Having now, however, obtained it, I applied myself to the perusal of its sacred pages; and although it was allowed me but for a limited time, so that I became only partially acquainted with it, the perusal formed an epoch in my life.

At this time I had not courage to enter the confessional, for the perplexity and incessant agitation of my mind left me no composure, even for self-examination. The society of Léonce, and the sentiments he inspired, almost transformed me.

After I had made him acquainted with the conflicting state of my religious feelings, he devoted

himself incessantly to me ; and his tenderness, though not expressed in words, sank deep into my soul, and became an absorbing happiness ; so that the habitual tributes of family affection which had hitherto been reciprocated amongst us, were insipid and heartless in comparison with his devotion to me.

Yet his devotedness, though intensely gratifying, instead of elating, humbled me ; and the coveted light, which I was continually receiving from his superior understanding, served but to show me my own inferiority and demerits. But I could have been well content to sit ever at his feet, and owe to him alone all I wished to know and to become.

As October commenced, our large party began daily to diminish, so that we were no longer in a crowd. I then became conscious of absorbing too much of the society of Léonce. My sisters quizzed me, and my father, I thought, looked grave and anxious, whenever his glance fell on us together. There were also others who seemed to think they had a right to know the subjects of Léonce's earnest discourse with me.

The apprehension of wrong, on my part, threw me into painful abstractions ; and, absorbed in my feelings, I secluded myself from the social circle. Shut up in my own room, timidity and self-distrust took possession of me. I became imaginative and prescient to a painful degree, fearing that even Léonce's regard might already be diminished by

the preference I had shown for his society. This thought was so depressing and humiliating, that, when again in his presence, I was no longer able to converse with him frankly. I fancied that, having already occupied him too much, I ought to limit our intercourse, lest I should wear out his friendship.

I did not foresee the penance I was inflicting on myself by this mode of repairing the wrong ; still less did I imagine it would affect Léonce, and draw painful observation on the change it caused in his appearance and deportment. He who had appeared to have been almost restored to health and happiness, was now plunged deeper than ever into silence and melancholy. I was perhaps more affected by this change than any one. New apprehensions assailed me. I attempted, but was utterly unable, to converse with him as heretofore. I longed to invoke his aid in unravelling the web which my own fancies and fears had woven, and which I had neither tact nor power to accomplish without his assistance. I wept, when alone, at the coldness that had sprung up between us, without any apparent cause but my own fastidiousness,—for so I now called what at first had seemed but the dues of delicacy, and respect for his good opinion.

Oh, if I might but once again make my peace with him !—but once again believe that his friendship would be as eternal as my own ! It was thus I

vented my anxiety and cherished feelings, fertile in bliss and woe!

When the soul first wakes to its own consciousness—raised to the third heaven—it incorporates the sentiment of eternity with its opening visions, but soon finds them rent from its grasp, and itself, bereft of its throbbing aspirations, cast back to the cold realities of an earthly life.

While wandering about, as I often did, alone, wrapt in waking dreams, or lost in the regions of fancy, my uncle one morning arrived unexpectedly, and encountered me early in the park. His presence filled me with apprehension. I feared his scrutiny, and anticipated his displeasure, and soon escaped from him, without learning, until some months after, that, under his control, events were then passing around me that fixed my fate, without giving me an option in it.

A poetical work appeared about this time, which, though since forgotten, was considered in its day an elegant and captivating production.

With this poem,—Mrs. Tighe's *Psyche*—lent me by a lady of our party, I shut myself up on leaving my uncle in the park, in my own room, to peruse it without interruption. I had supposed, from its title, that it was a sort of metaphysical analysis of the soul. How greatly was I surprised at finding it a tale of love! With what eagerness I scanned every feature of a passion which I supposed to be utterly

unknown to me. Whoever has perused this gem of poetry will feel that its beautiful and affecting allegory must have riveted the attention of a girl of sixteen, reading it for the first time. I became so absorbed in it as to be utterly unconscious of the lapse of time. Many hours had passed since breakfast. Even the lunch-hour had gone by, and I knew it not, although it was already time to dress for dinner, when Mary, my own maid, knocking at my door, reminded me that the first bell had rung.

I threw aside my book, and observing Mary's countenance, saw in it something unusual, and inquired what ailed her.

She answered by tears which she appeared unable to restrain, and, in broken words, told me the Marquis de Grammont had gone away to London.

'Gone to London! When? Why?'

'Oh, Miss Helen, we do not know why he has gone. But I myself saw him go, about an hour since. I thought you didn't know of his going, as you were not with the young ladies and the rest of the party, to bid him good bye; and I'm sure he missed you, for he kept looking round every minute, as if he expected you to come; and he turned so pale when he saw you didn't come, that I could hardly help crying before his face. But as soon as he was gone, I went into the kitchen, and had a good cry; for he was always so condescending and so mindful

of everybody that did him the least service, and he ——”

She had proceeded thus far, when she saw me stagger, and sink into a chair. I was almost unable to keep life in me. My breath grew shorter and shorter, when Mary thoughtfully opened a window, and drew my chair to it. The refreshment which the air afforded enabled me to recover my recollection and my prudence. I told her I had been reading so closely that I had forgotten the lunch-hour, and was quite exhausted.

I then dismissed her for a glass of water, and thus gained a few moments to myself, during which I prostrated myself on the floor in an agony of feeling. The sublime and impassioned thoughts so richly scattered in the pages of *Psyche*, filled my heart, and swelled it almost to suffocation, while its beautiful personifications stood around me like ministering spirits. Their voices reached my ear, and realizing the beautiful allegory of *Love and the Soul*, as a verity whose fruition was only to be attained in heaven, I devoutly prayed to die.

Could I, at that moment, have foreseen the long years of sorrow betwixt me and death, I could hardly have desired it more intensely.

Mary returned, and in obedience to my injunction, without informing any one of my indisposition. With more judgment than her mistress, she had thought

a glass of water no remedy for exhaustion, and had brought with her substantial refreshment.

It was in vain that I tried to swallow even a single morsel. My throat was closed.

It was necessary I should make my appearance at table, and without being at all aware of any change in my looks, I was soon, by Mary's efforts, dressed and ready to descend.

I entered the dining-room with as firm a step as I could command. The party was already seated, and every one turned to look at me as I took my chair. The bishop in particular fixed his eyes on me.

I was just able to move to my mother and him, and looking up and down the table to ascertain an absence I had not yet realized, I met my father's eye, who, instantly laying down his knife and fork, uttered an exclamation of alarm. A dimness came over my sight, and a swelling at my heart stopped my breath. I resigned myself cordially to what I supposed to be death, and in a moment both sight and consciousness were gone.

When I came to life again, I was on my bed, in my own chamber; and there were so many loving faces hanging over me, which at first I knew not, that I thought I was already in heaven.

My dear mother was chafing my hands, my sisters applying smelling bottles, and each one performing some kind office. An exclamation of 'thank God!'



drew my attention to my dear father at the foot of my bed. My uncle was standing by him. In short, almost the whole party had assembled round me.

I soon prevailed on them to return to the dining-room, and leave me to the care of Mary.

Revived by so much kindness, I should have been quite tranquil, but vivid recollections came rushing on me, reminding me how ill I had sustained the shock inflicted, and how much I had yet to do to repress my feelings and keep my own secret.

That no one knew the bitterness of what I felt was all the consolation that remained to me. Yet I longed for some pitying friend, on whose shoulder I might lay my head, and penitently reveal the folly of having trusted in Léonce's sincerity.

Then again my blood, as it rushed to my heart, vindicated him, and delivered me anew to the charm of a tenderness in which I could not have been mistaken. Days and nights of reverie and retrospection were insufficient to trace the whole of our intercourse, and recal every loved syllable he had uttered, with its accompanying emphasis, tone, and look.

But when the annihilation of all this was again thrown back, in full proof on my heart, by the fact of his departure, I felt there was no more hope on earth for me, and that I was for ever severed from the interests of life.

But we must not understand the language of impassioned feeling literally.

Happily, hyperbole of every kind is but of partial meaning and brief duration.

Reason and religion, the great gifts of God to man, return when the tempest of passion is past, to calm and to comfort the heart, and induce submission to their salutary restraints.

After some time, I became composed enough to suppose it possible that I had myself been the cause of Léonce's abrupt departure. Why had I been so often absent from the family circle? Had he not more reason to complain of me than I of him? This thought was agony, for it created a responsibility which I was not able to endure. Yet was he not privileged at any moment to ask for an explanation of an apparent caprice? I had then treated him capriciously! This possibility was the climax of suffering!

But the sun rises and sets, and the moon, with her soothing light, holds her never-varying course in the heavens, whatever tempests shake the terrestrial world, or whatever sorrows drain the heart of its life.

Weeks passed, and no one spoke to me of Léonce. Why was he thus cast utterly out of sight? What had he done to offend the whole house? I dared not ask, lest I should be detected in thinking of him.

At a future time, I learnt it was by my father's express commands that Léonce's name was never uttered in my hearing, or myself subjected to any

remark in reference to what had passed on the day of his departure.

He was not unaware, it seemed, of what was passing in my mind, but he had his own views in adopting the course I have mentioned, as it was both my uncle's and his policy that I should forget Léonce altogether.

## CHAPTER IV.

Are we not much bound, think you, to those which should have taught us the truth, out of God's book and his holy Scriptures, that they have shut up that book and Scriptures from us, and none of us so bold as once to open it, or read in it ?

*Homily on Peril of Idolatry.*

**T**IME, the great healer of sorrow, passed on, and I became anxious once more to perform in the confessional what I had not yet ceased to consider a duty. I felt the necessity of disencumbering my conscience of a load of wrong, which it had accumulated in reference to a knowledge of many religious truths, which, unacknowledged, seemed to be held unworthily, and as it were surreptitiously.

With any other priest than Father Ossory, my repugnance to confession would have been too great to have been overcome. After my removal from his vicinity, I found it impossible to consider the practice as at all endurable. Not only because of the reluctance, so natural to us all, to expose our secret faults, but because I perceived that those faults were greatly aggravated by the questioning, and acquaintance thereby made with evil of which the penitent was before entirely ignorant.

As a Roman Catholic, I could not make an

avowal of such a repugnance, even to a confessor, without danger to myself, because it would have impugned an ordinance of the church. I therefore never made it, until later in life, when under the sanction of an open dissent.

At the time of which I am speaking, when my intercourse with the priesthood was confined to Father Ossory, I had no distaste to the confessional on the ground mentioned above, my inexperience of life not permitting the thought, that in so sacred an intercourse offences might be offered to purity which must damage it for ever. In confessing to Father Ossory, the outpouring of the heart was a spontaneous act. There were no leading questions to induct the mind into an acquaintance with wrong of which it was ignorant, and of which the bare mention is a defilement. Confession to him was but casting, as it were, the guilt of the soul upon *him*, that by his admonitions and his intercession the penitent himself might be assisted in a delivery from it.

At this time I knew not of that 'Great High Priest, who is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by him;' and this ignorance must be my apology for the great reverence I entertained for one who assumed to be his representative.

Many weeks had passed since I last saw Father Ossory in the confessional, and as I waited on him in the oratory, he rose to greet me, with a kindness of manner that seemed to say, 'It is my lost child

returned !' I knelt to kiss his hand, but he raised me instantly, with reproofs for a homage which he disclaimed.

I had thus bent before him under the weight of various feelings which would not allow me to meet his eye. Alas ! when I had met him last for the purpose of confession, I had never seen Léonce, nor did I then know myself as I now did. I had been raised to the heights of happiness, and plunged into the depths of grief, in that interval. I now needed advice and sympathy ; yet how tell the good Father of my childish and unavailing griefs ? Could I look on that discerning though benignant countenance, and not quail before it ? Could he fail to despise the childishness and yet arrogance of my assumption, in claiming him as an auditor of what, to him, must seem puerile ?

I remained like a statue before him, with my head bent, until tears coursed each other down my face.

' My dear daughter,' he at length said, ' have you something to say to me which you find it difficult and painful to express ? And why is it so ? Am I not entitled, from the office I hold, to your confidence ? And have I not also a right to share your perplexities, and to support you under your difficulties ? Let us sit down and converse freely together, and may the blessing of God be upon us !'

As I felt myself further than ever from con-

fession at that moment, and thought only of deferring it, I sat down, and in reply to him, said,—

‘I have indeed much to confess to you, and to inquire of you, father. But I fear it is not in my power at this time to unburden my heart, though it is greatly oppressed. But there is one thing which lies heavily on it. Since I last communed with you, I have become acquainted with the Protestant Bible, and am very anxious to learn not only your opinion of my having done so, but also of the sacred book itself.’

‘Why, the Bible, my child, whether Protestant or Catholic, is the book of God, and there is no such essential difference between the two as is generally supposed. But the Bible is not a book for the ignorant or the young, except under pastoral guidance.’

‘You would not then, father, approve of my having a Bible in my own keeping?’

‘Not to be entirely at your own disposal, daughter. You might be allowed to read portions of it, as indeed you must already have done, if I recollect rightly.’

‘I have read very short passages from it. But they were so mixed up with other writings which did not form any part of the inspired book, that until lately I had no more reverence for the one than the other. Was it right I should have felt thus? and am I wrong now in making a distinction

that exalts the one and, by comparison, disparages the other?’

‘My dear daughter, the inquiries you make will lead you into deep waters. Are you able to sound them? What if they prove unfathomable? I will endeavour to solve your difficulties, although, in my weak and individual capacity, I assume no infallibility. Our church, indeed, is infallible, but it pledges not itself for the infallibility of its respective ministers; and, in truth, there is strictly ‘none good but one, that is God.’ How has your mind been so perturbed? Of what are you apprehensive? You seem to think that your religious training has been defective. If, indeed, it has been so, it is myself alone that must be answerable for it.’

‘If you will permit me, reverend father, to explain myself, I will endeavour to do so. I do not complain of you, or of any other, that I have been left almost entirely to oral instruction for an acquaintance with the requirements of my Maker. It has doubtless been thought best that it should be so. But if it might be permitted, I should like now to read the words of divine inspiration in God’s own book. I would learn from the sacred page itself the nature of that worship which is acceptable to Him who dwelleth in light; and I would drink of that living water which, as I have read, becomes a fountain of worship in the heart of him who has drunk of it.’



‘Your aspirations, dear child, are lofty. But we are in danger of immoderate ambition, in the knowledge of even sacred things. It is possible to extend our inquiries beyond due bounds in spiritual matters ; and we do so when we pry into the mysterious nature of the Divine Being, not so much from a design to adore him, as from a vain curiosity to know all things. In things purely natural, a knowledge of the object goes before affection for it ; but in things supernatural, the soul is won by them, and united to them, without comprehending them. Beware of presumption, dear child, and deprave not your understanding by proudly aspiring to know that which is above it ; while, possibly, the observance of duties within your power may be neglected. The morality of the Christian religion is the purest and most perfect in the world. This you cannot admire too much, or practise too strictly. I much fear that the Evil One is busy with you, daughter, and how know I whether I may be able to disentangle you from the net he is drawing around you ! That church in whose infallibility you have been instructed, and from whose guidance I dare not swerve, does not allow me to grant what you desire. But be assured there is more piety in submission to sacred authority, than in cherishing a vain longing after prohibited objects, the attainment of which might lead you still further from the narrow path of duty and safety. Where is your ‘rosary’ ? Have you been faithful to its requirements ? Have

your 'aves' been offered in full numbers? and have you habitually addressed yourself to the blessed Virgin and the Saints for their mediation with God?

'May I tell you, father, what words are sounding in my ears at this moment? They are a recollection of what I read in the sacred book.'

'Speak, my child.'

'There is *one* Mediator betwixt God and man—the man Christ Jesus.' Is there more than one? The expression I have quoted, and many others like it, in the Protestant Bible, seem to exclude the idea of any mediator but the blessed Jesus himself.'

Father Ossory here rose in haste, saying, as he did so,—'Do you know, daughter, that to question the truth of any doctrine incorporated in the creeds of the church is damning heresy? And such, as in stricter times, would have sent the recusant to the stake? If my words sound harshly to you, yet reject them not; but receive them as the warning of that love which every true pastor in our holy church feels in an especial degree for the lambs of his flock. Yesterday, you were but as a babe, and already, you have attained to a startling maturity; and having cast away that deference for what has hitherto been sacred in your eyes, you have replaced it by a reckless curiosity, that may eventually lead you beyond the saving pale of the church in whose bosom you have been reared. You ask me if there is more than one

mediator. Do you not know that the church recognises many? You look surprised, dear child! Is it then 'lack of knowledge' that has set thee adrift on the ocean of opinion? I must, henceforth, take thee under my own especial guidance. But I cannot consent to any further perusal of a *Protestant Bible*,—not even to a single page of it. And I hope shortly to learn, in a full and voluntary confession, the means by which my child has been put in possession of a book, which has been used to seduce her from both duty and faith. For the present, know in brief, that '*the Holy Mother of God stands first on the list of all saints and intercessors, and that it is she who negotiates for, and with us, the work of our salvation, by her mediation with her divine Son, who can refuse her nothing.*'\* '*The blessed Virgin has a place in heaven, before all other saints, and even before the archangels.*' To her, '*Queen of Saints, and Queen of Angels, Tower of David, Tower of Ivory!*' I commend thee, my daughter. '*Apply to her, for she is the only refuge of the destitute and afflicted.*'† And now, farewell for a short season. I expect you to send me, without delay, that bone of contention between us, the Protestant Bible. Till I receive it, my anxiety will be great and unceasing.'

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\* Roman-catholic Prayer Book, entitled *The Key of Heaven*.

† Note 2.

I told the good father that I was no longer in possession of it. Our interview ended thus, and I returned from it to my own chamber. I found there my mother and sisters.

My mother expressed her satisfaction at the interview I had just had with my confessor. But I could not reciprocate her feeling, and she looked askingly in my face for the cause, but did not inquire.

My conversation with Father Ossory had shocked and startled me; on many points I could not but perceive that my inquiries had been evaded, and that I had left him without acquiring the information I needed.

In his zeal for the infallibility of his church, he had exhibited a severity foreign to his ordinary habits of speaking on that subject, and his enumeration of the claims and titles of the Virgin appeared to me as unauthorized as they were absurd.

Much as I wished to open my heart to my mother on this subject, it would have been impossible to complain to her of the good father; although his advice, so ill adapted to allay the anxiety and satisfy the yearnings of my heart after something more than was to be found in the rosary or the aves, or even in appeals to the saints, had left me more unhappy than before the interview.

My mother expressed the most tender concern for a sadness she did not inquire into, and proposed a ride before dinner, with my father and brother.

I was but too happy to adopt her suggestion, and escape thus from myself; and was soon in a canter on my favourite steed.

‘Vivian Grey’ tells us, that a ride on horseback is a cure for every evil, and the best preparation for all enterprises, whether for the conquest of the world or the conquest of oneself. I was thankful for the relief which a view of earth and sky once more afforded me, in the varied forms of beauty and grace always to be found in inanimate nature. My dear father’s conversation, too, during our ride, was so well adapted to draw my thoughts from my own griefs to the stern realities of suffering, so universal in the pathway of life, that I dismounted from my horse with a feeling of contempt for that sensibility which had absorbed me in self.

When the family assembled at dinner, we were without visitors. So unusual a circumstance, in my father’s house, threw, at first, a sort of loneliness over the circle. But afterwards, as an unfettered and confidential family intercourse sprang up amongst us, the peculiar charm of home was without alloy.

My father’s conversation, on this day, with Mr. Rivers, after the cloth had been removed and the servants withdrawn, struck me as exhibiting a state of mind, on the subject of his faith, resembling my own.

Yet I dared not volunteer a thought on such a subject in the presence of my mother, who, though

not intolerant in her opinions, was yet so tenacious of the authority of her church, and so assured of its infallibility, that she shuddered at the idea of resisting it in any form.

My father's wavering opinions and inconsistent practices were but the natural result of his finding it impossible to reconcile with reason and common sense the dogmas with which he felt his mind in a state of perpetual antagonism. Yet, had he been as frank with his confessor as might have been expected, it is possible that two men so thoroughly good and intelligent as Father Ossory and himself, both in spirit and in life, might have succeeded in awakening each other to a knowledge of the truth.

Our school-room studies had long since been ended, but our two teachers still remained, to assist in, and in some degree superintend our pursuits and movements.

Autumn had far advanced, and nature wore her gloomiest and most disordered aspect, when Miss White one day informed us, very abruptly, that both Mr. Rivers and herself were to leave us on the following day. She burst into tears as she ended her communication, and, touched by her emotion, we wept with her. All that had ever been disagreeable in her, disappeared at once, and we recollected only what was amiable in her character, and the number of years she had been with us.

We inquired why she went away, and so sud-

denly? but she only replied by saying—‘It would be impossible for me to stay for ever. My duties have been some time over, and my work, so far as I have been able to make it so, is, I hope, complete. My departure has, therefore, been some weeks decided on. You all play and sing very sweetly—Caroline divinely; and I think that even in London, or Paris, no one would discover in your dancing that you had not been taught by a first-rate professor.

‘But I will not enumerate my achievements; it would be more consonant with my feelings to speak of what still remains to be done to make you, Dora, and Helen, what I could have wished to see you. You must, however, bear witness for me, that it is not *my* fault if you have been allowed to acquire, by too much reading, a knowledge of many things of which it had been better for you to have been ignorant. A child of our holy church needs not to know more of religion or morals than her priest teaches her. Alas, my dear girls! you have been allowed to read the Bible, and to see it applied by Protestant writers to the condemnation of your own infallible church. What has been the consequence? Certainly only what might have been expected. You have fallen into the snares of heresy, and presume to think for yourselves, and judge for yourselves, as though independent thought and opinion were allowable and praiseworthy. Only yesterday, my dear

Helen, I found a book open in your room, whose pages were marked all over with your pencil, indicating a close attention to and approbation of their contents.

‘ And what was that book, forsooth? No other than ‘ Newton, on the Prophecies ! ’

‘ Why, my dear, if, when that book first appeared in England, our church had had the power which she formerly had, the author, from what I saw of its contents, would have been offered up, a just sacrifice to God, on the rack, or in the flames of the Holy Inquisition.’

Dora and I shuddered, and looked at each other, for we had both been reading this heretical book ; and although we could not credit Miss White’s extravagant statement of the punishment which she conceived the author would have been exposed to under certain circumstances, her language was so decided and so strong, as to indicate almost a ferocity of feeling against those who differed from her in religion.

Having recovered from our surprise, for we had never before found her so earnest and so severe in her rebukes, we attempted a justification of ourselves ; not, certainly, expecting to convince Miss White, but because, as it led us into an examination of our own views and conduct, it might not prove wholly unsatisfactory to our own minds. We had no desire to oppose Miss White, especially now,



when her vocation was ended; but Dora, with her habitual fearlessness, inquired of her whether, if it had fallen to her lot to judge Bishop Newton and assign his punishment, she could have consented to take his life for his mere exposition of Scripture contrary to the received opinions of the church.

‘Most certainly,’ she replied.

‘On what authority?’ said Dora.

‘On that of the church, certainly.’

‘And does the church, then, sanction human sacrifices?’

‘It disposes of its enemies, of course, Dora.’

‘By what law?’

‘By the *Canon law*,\* which is the law of the church.’

‘I hope you are mistaken, Miss White. Your report of the church revolts me. Such a practice as you attribute to it could only be tolerated by savages or demons, and I would fain hope that you have overstated the fact.’

‘Dora,’ said Miss White, somewhat angrily, ‘we will drop this subject. I have no hope of reclaiming you.’

‘My dear Miss White,’ said Caroline, ‘do not say so, just as you are leaving us. There will now be no one to care for Dora’s soul as you have done.’

‘Carry,’ said Dora, ‘you forget our good Father Ossory and our parents.’

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\* Note 3.

‘I am afraid I did, for the moment,’ said Caroline; ‘but it is because Miss White is going, that I thought only of her.’

At this moment Mr. Rivers entered the library, and Dora expressed to him her concern and mine at having just learned that it was his intention soon to leave us.

He said, he also felt deep regret at a movement which had been rather suddenly decided on. ‘It is impossible,’ he continued, ‘after so long a residence in a family where one has been made so truly happy, not to feel that parting is a wrench intensely painful; but I hope that the course of reading and instruction with which I have furnished you for some years past, and for the effects of which I consider myself responsible, will in future life produce such fruits, to each of you ladies, as shall cause you sometimes to think of me with approbation. It is impossible to foresee what part either of you may have to perform in life.

‘Human existence is full of vicissitude, and we are all born to trouble. But good principles, and views of duty consonant with truth, will, under God’s blessing, conduct us through all dangers and difficulties; if not to happiness, at least to peace, and quietness of mind.’

‘And you, only, Mr. Rivers,’ interrupted Miss White, angrily, ‘know how to teach either religion or duty—eh?’

‘That is an inference unworthy of a candid opponent, Miss White; but permit me, once for all, to say, with the emphasis of last words, that there is no mind to which the Scriptures are unknown that can be in possession of a test by which religious opinions may be effectually tried. This remark for *you*, Miss White. As for these young ladies, they, at present, know but little of the Bible; and even that little was not taught by me. It was bestowed on them by a parental hand, and I have reason to hope and believe that they will not be much longer unacquainted with that blessed and indispensable book; but that having it at hand, they will use their own excellent understandings on what they are taught of religion; and, comparing it with the Word of God, be able to ascertain whether it is or not consistent with the teaching of Inspiration.’

‘Go on, Mr. Rivers, to the last moment,’ exclaimed Miss White, sharply; ‘your assumptions might be permitted to a member of our infallible Church, but to no other. I am happy to say, for myself, that your teaching has never shaken *my* faith!’

‘Nor yours mine, Miss White. So far, we are quits,’ concluded Mr. Rivers, with a bow.

At this moment we rose to repair to the drawing-room, to await the announcement of dinner. Mr. Rivers, notwithstanding their skirmish, led Miss White; and we followed.

As we descended the stairs, we were joined by my brother. We found already assembled in the drawing-room, not only my father and mother, and Father Ossory, but the bishop also; and two other gentlemen, who were strangers to us, of venerable appearance.

As our spirits were quite below par, the appearance of something like a party, though a small one, was very welcome to us all.

The two gentlemen proved to be no other than two of the choicest spirits of the age, as we were not long in discovering.

The character of even their ordinary speaking, was riveting to the ear; but when, having plunged into a subject which kindled their own enthusiasm, they threw the reins on the neck of Fancy, every sentence became a spell, until the entranced listener was borne away captive, to do homage to their mysterious powers of thought and language.

My father, who well knew how to draw them out, did not slumber at his post. As the servants withdrew, he renewed his imperceptible promptings, so as to lead them to climax after climax; until my mother's attention, like that of her daughters', became so enchained, that we thought not of moving, or she of giving the signal for it.

A moment's pause occurring, we were beginning to recollect ourselves, when the elder Mr. —, after contemplating my brother for a few minutes with a

quizzical air, inquired, in a tone of banter, what he was thinking of?

‘I was thinking of you, sir,’ replied William.

‘Oh! I’m glad of that, as I was thinking of *you*. Do you know that I am a fortune teller?’

‘Are you, sir?’ said William, with a startled air; but recovering, said, ‘I wish you would tell me *my* fortune, sir.’

‘If you wish it, you shall have it, my man,’ said he, fixing on him a look of scrutiny that made him quail. ‘Well, then—‘the past, the present, and the future,’ as Le Norman says. I pass over the ordinary incantations, and begin with the ‘past.’ You have already lived in the world nearly twenty years, and have done nothing but eat, drink, sleep, run, ride, groom horses, and talk to stable boys.’

William flushed, and looked affronted, muttering ‘I’ve done what others do, sir.’

‘Arrah! my young buck—don’t forget who ye are speaking to,’ exclaimed Mr. —, in a tone of exquisite jocularitv. ‘I can tell you what you have *not* done, as well as what you *have* done. You have not loved Greek, or Latin, or mathematics, or science, or ‘letter-press’ of any sort. But as you are come, almost, to man’s estate, your work is cut out, and you must now do something. Your profession is determined on—you are going on the road.’

‘The road, sir! What, to be a highwayman, sir?’

‘Not exactly *that*. A postillion, perhaps, or a

mail-coachman, or a waggoner. Which do you prefer ?'

'Neither, sir.'

'I can't *untell* your fortune, my boy. You must take one of the three. A mail-coachman is a four-in-hand gentleman ; who, if he doesn't drive the world before him, drags it after him. Come, come, Willy ! as you are 'a born gentleman,' keep up the craft. Take the coachman's box, for it is your fortune to be an actor in equestrian games ; and if you break your neck, like Phaeton, it will be all in your line, and easy enough, in these days, for Science to direct the dovetailing of a bit of bone into the vertebræ, that shall set your head again on your shoulders in a twinkling. I suppose you are acquainted with Phaeton, Willy, being one of your clan ?'

'Yes, sir, I suppose I am ; but I forget his surname.'

The loud laugh that followed this reply was barely restrained until my mother and we, who had risen from table, made our escape from the dining-room, with merry faces, though certainly at poor Willy's expense.

Our mirth died away as the laughter of the dining-room was lost in distance, and we soon found ourselves circling round the fire in the drawing-room ; and with that feeling of restlessness which precedes a change such as we were now anticipating, we occu-

pied ourselves with mere nothings ; more disposed to ruminate than to read or converse.

Miss White was also meditative and silent for some time. Then, turning to my mother, she inquired if she could explain to her the extraordinary jest played off upon William at table. My mother replied, that my father, perplexed beyond measure with the uncontrollable propensities of William, had asked Mr. —, who was deeply read in human nature, if he could advise him how to manage him, so as to give a new bias to his character ; and she supposed it was in consequence of this that Mr. — had bantered William as he did, as a mere experiment on his disposition and capacity.

‘I was not sorry,’ said my mother, ‘to see the boy blush ; I hardly thought he would have taken it so much in earnest.’

‘It was only a flash of anger, Lady Mulgrave,’ said Miss White. ‘I much fear you will never do anything with William, so long as he is allowed to hang about the cottage of the fosterer. Mrs. Brian, the daughter from Dublin, is returned a widow, and has two daughters growing up. From what I have seen and known of her, I should think her capable of any kind of mischief to your family, Lady Mulgrave ; and as I am leaving you, I am glad to have an opportunity of speaking to your ladyship on this subject. I do not blame Mr. Rivers for William’s intercourse with the Brians, because I believe that

Sir William, who is always more kind to others than to himself, could not be prevailed on to prohibit it entirely, on account of his tenderness for the feelings of his foster-mother; and I fear that advantage has been taken of William's visits to the cottage to introduce the daughters to him, and to inveigle him into some sort of connexion with one of them. William's supposed 'passion for the stable' should be translated 'passion for the cottage-girl.'

My mother, who never had a suspicion of William's being a visitant at the cottage, became more agitated than I had ever seen her. She rose hurriedly, and taking Miss White's arm, led her away to her own room, and did not return until the gentlemen were summoned to coffee.

William was not with them, and it was found on inquiry that he had left the dining-room immediately after the ladies.

Mr. Rivers being informed of what had passed, went instantly in search of his pupil, and returned, in about an hour, with him on his arm. No reproofs were administered to him that night; but the next morning, my father was with him, before he had left his room. Meantime our guests were preparing for departure, and immediately after breakfast, took leave of us.

My uncle then left us, taking Father Ossory and William with him.

No sooner were they gone, than two cars drove



up, for the accommodation of Mr. Rivers and Miss White. They shortly after set off, in different directions; the one to the north of the island, the other to England.

As they were borne away, we all shed tears, and the parting with so many of our circle on one morning created a sort of desolation almost insupportable.

I remember at this moment the feeling of solemn responsibility that seemed to be laid upon my sisters and myself, on thus being committed to our own keeping, after so many years of subjection and dependence upon the guidance and promptings of our teachers. Almost to the last moment, we continued, from habit, to ask direction of Miss White, who, at last, was too much affected to reply to us.

We did her the justice to remember that, although mistakenly anxious for our welfare on points that did not come under her control, she was not despotic. Even her querulousness was harmless, and she was, perhaps, as good-tempered as she could be under the influence of a religious zeal, which kept her always quarrelling with her colleague.

A visible weight fell on my father and mother on this occasion, which seemed greater than was natural. They retired to their private room together as soon as the cars had driven off, dined there alone, and were not visible till the following morning.

Meantime, as we could not apply ourselves to anything, my sisters and I roamed about the deserted

house, hanging upon each other, and thinking, perhaps from sheer idleness, more of the ghosts and fairies of former times than of ourselves. Our dinner had been ordered in our own boudoir, and thither, when it was announced, we repaired.

As we sat by the fire side, conversing idly, after dinner, it seemed to strike each of us that the very abrupt departure of Mr. Rivers and Miss White must have been caused by some sudden necessity or purpose of their own, perhaps. We all agreed in thinking that my father and mother could not have contrived it; yet they parted with them in perfect friendliness, as if their going was a movement in which they acquiesced.

But the seclusion of our parents immediately after they were gone, without making any arrangement for the new position and loneliness of their children, was so extraordinary, and unlike themselves, that we could augur nothing from it. Thrown out of every habit, and every species of occupation, the very current of our life was, as it were, suspended, and we were more disposed to vent our complaints in tears than in words. We went to the window, watched the setting sun as it dropped below the horizon, and should soon have sunk into paralysing *ennui*, had not our good father, early in the evening, sent us one of the London papers, which had just arrived.

We all blessed the boon, and forming a close

circle, one took up rug-work, and another netting, while Dora read aloud, for the benefit of all, the news of the day.

There was an unusual flush of news from foreign parts in the paper. Amongst other things, the arrival of Buonaparte at St. Helena, whose fallen greatness, notwithstanding the almost universal rejoicing it occasioned, we were more disposed to commiserate than to exult in; as some of the numerous privations incident to his new position became apparent to us.

The patriotic Lavalette and his heroic wife, the narrative of whose peril and escape quickened our pulses, had also their meed of sympathy. Thus, with alternate reading and fancy work, we contrived to finish our day, uttering now and then a thought or a good wish for those who were driving fast away from a home which had been so long theirs, and whom, perhaps, we should see no more.

Before we separated for the night, we had resolved on applying to my father for permission to use his library, and to cull for ourselves from its shelves.

Carry did not participate in this application, determined, as she said, not to burden her mind with a knowledge of things for which she had neither use nor relish, and which had been so much condemned by her dear Miss White and Father Ossory.

Dora and I did not attempt to seduce her from

her self-complacency, nor did we love her a whit less for her difference of taste.

On the morrow, our dear parents reappeared to our gladdened sight. They were evidently sad, and on our asking my mother privately if anything unusual disturbed them, she said that my father had suffered very much at the necessity and the suddenness of parting with two persons of his household so much valued as Mr. Rivers and Miss White. Dora ventured to inquire further, what occasioned this necessity and suddenness, but my mother simply replied, 'What you, at present, would not perhaps understand, and which it may never be necessary for you to know.'

We obtained from my father the gratification of every wish. The library had lately been weeded of its rubbish by Mr. Rivers, so that the keys were only withheld from us until my father had removed some few volumes which he did not think adapted to our use.

After this, Dora and I speedily entered on our catering, and soon brought to hand the provision we required.

Of history we had had enough already; of prose fictions nothing, and of poetry almost nothing. But we found abundance of these things on the shelves, and amongst other works, Edgeworth's publications complete. Her *Education*, her *Belinda*, and every other of her delightful tales was there. But for the

present we laid these aside to seek for information on those theological subjects in dispute between the two churches, of which we had picked up so much from the squabbling discussions of our teachers as to excite our inquiries without satisfying them.

Dora and I were by no means similar in our selection either of subjects or books. Her taste for the ludicrous, and her ready detection of it, led her to read sarcastic rather than serious disquisitions. She thus laughed herself out of the absurdities of her faith, without replacing them with rational and essential opinions.

I was so fortunate as to possess some advantage over Dora in the recollection I cherished of Léonce's treatment of controversy on sacred things.

Every opinion and thought of his was written in my heart, and I would gladly have imparted this advantage to her if I could have quoted what I recollected of his in his own words. But the arch look with which she used to detect me whenever I drew on him, either for an argument or an illustration, checked even the communication of my own thoughts, and left us, though not at variance, yet without a perfect conformity of views and feelings.

We passed the winter, which was unusually severe, in varied reading, without regretting, after we had once learnt to regulate ourselves, that we had been thrown upon our own discretion. Caroline, who spent almost all her time with my mother, was won-

derfully improved, both in intelligence and sweetness of manners, by her society, keeping up her music by singing and playing daily, for her mother's pleasure and her own.

Looking back at this distance of time to that past which I am attempting to recal, I feel that I should be somewhat incredulous if it were related by another, that two girls of Dora's age and mine, having an extensive library at command, with the option of selecting from it, had chosen to apply themselves, from day to day, to the perusal of works of theology, rather than to those light and amusing productions adapted to a juvenile taste. But when I recollect how we had been brought up; how little we had mixed with young people of our own age, how unacquainted we were with works of amusement, and therefore how undeveloped was our taste for such reading, the improbability of the fact disappears. Naturally disposed to inquiry, and excluded by our locality from public amusements, we should have made great progress in book knowledge, had we not been checked and restricted, just as our faculties were awaking to a relish for information, and beginning to cry, 'Give, give!'

Still, where there is appetite it will seize on aliment, whether suitable or unsuitable, wherever it may be obtained. As we had been denied at the proper time that which would have been adapted to our wants, we were forced on whatever else was within

our reach. Thus it was that that endless theme, 'the church,' 'the infallible church,' 'the holy church,' in contrast with that refuse of churches and of men which did not come within its pale, forced itself on our attention, and precociously enlisted us in all the grave subjects discussed in reference to it.

When, however, we had satisfied ourselves for the present with theology, we passed to other subjects; but not to forget what we had learnt on this primary branch of human knowledge. It is indeed a great mistake to suppose that young persons cannot be interested in religious discussion.

When once the immense importance of religion over all other things has been deeply impressed on the mind, everything that relates to it becomes pre-eminent; and there is no longer anything marvellous in its taking precedence of that, even, to which the levity of youth and the folly of childhood are naturally addicted.

With such religious training as ours, however, a deep sense of religion in any of us could hardly be accounted for; neither do I pretend to account for it, nor would it be possible to do so without referring to an agency that cannot even be hinted at without solemnity of feeling.

Our winter's reading, though highly gratifying to my sister and myself, had a somewhat different effect on us individually; perhaps owing to the different tastes exercised in the selection of our authors. For

myself, I was more than ever convinced of the errors I had imbibed in my childhood, and of the much I had yet to unlearn before I could attain to any certain knowledge of religious truth ; while Dora, more delighted with the arguments she had acquired to aid her wit than impressed with the serious nature of the topics on which she exercised it, evasively, if not sceptically, still asked, ' What is truth ?'

With respect to confession, our respect for which was effectually undermined, Dora and I were avowedly at variance. I had in my heart for ever renounced it ; but not daring to acknowledge the renunciation, I sought to evade the practice by avoiding the priest ; determined that, should I be compelled to account for the omission, I would express my convictions, and acknowledge the new views I had acquired.

My sister asserted her determination to continue the practice, for the present at least, as she knew not how, she said, otherwise to relieve herself of the remorse of having so often laughed at the church's solemn jugglery in many of the most holy things incorporated in her creeds.



## CHAPTER V.

They have cast away the law of the Lord of Hosts, and despise the word of the holy one of Israel.—ISAIAH.

I HAD repeatedly, during the winter, been reminded in a brief and gentle remark by Father Ossory, that I was perilously omitting the duties of the 'confessional.' To this I had never attempted any reply.

One morning, as I went into the library at a very early hour, I found the good father seated there, with two Bibles before him, of which he was turning over the leaves.

Such an occupation surprised me, and seeing that I observed what he was doing, he remarked that he was comparing the Protestant and Catholic Bibles with each other, in order to ascertain the amount of their verbal differences; but he closed the books as I approached the table.

My late studies, as they were alien to his views, had created in my own mind a corresponding feeling of alienation from him, for which, as I now beheld him, my heart smote me, and I knelt at the table which stood betwixt us, to ask his blessing.

When he had pronounced it, he buried his face in his hands, and leant on the table.

He was sitting back to an eastern window, through the green Venetian of which the bright sun darted here and there a divided ray, that, except the spot on which it fell, left the room in tranquillising obscurity. The chastening power of this subdued light fell on my soul. It made me sad. I thought that the outward obscurity resembled that within me, as I hardly dared to acknowledge to myself what I believed, or what I thought of those new truths, which had lately dawned on my understanding, and to which, until this moment, when former views and influences were appealing to me, in the presence of my spiritual teacher, I had for some time given an undoubting credence. I now felt, shudderingly, that I was not emancipated from Romanism, nor from the duty I owed to it in the person of its priest. And yet I shrank with irrepressible aversion from that duty, of all others, which it was most incumbent on him to enforce. I continued kneeling, as a posture which suited best the state of my feelings, in the presence of him whom I had been accustomed to think of as holding the very thread of my spiritual destiny.

A deep silence had continued for some time, and as the good father seemed indisposed to break it, I began to think I had perhaps unjustifiably intruded on him at this hour, and that I ought to retire. While I hesitated, Father Ossory uncovered his face,

and raising himself from the table, sat erect on his chair, as if awaiting some communication from me.

I rose from my knees at the same moment, and apologizing to him for having unconsciously intruded on his privacy, was leaving the room, when he said—  
‘My child, I certainly did not expect to see you here at so early an hour; but as a room open to all, there can be no intrusion in your entering it at any hour, although you should find another here before you. I rather think, as you are in the habit of frequenting it and I am not, the apology for intrusion should come from me instead of you. But let us not spend precious time in settling an unimportant question of etiquette; rather let us avail ourselves of an opportunity which, wisely used, may, with God’s blessing, redound to His glory, if it but awaken a soul to the sense of duty neglected and of safety imperilled.’

Seeing that it was now impossible to retire without, at least, a conversation with Father Ossory, I endeavoured to rally my thoughts, and muster courage for it.

But tears were more ready than words, and would not be restrained. Though not in the confessional, the solemn thoughts that filled my soul seemed to make it a duty, even to God, that I should be as sincere and unreserved as though in confession before him.

While I wept and scanned the task before me,

Father Ossory again buried his face in his hands, as if not wishing to restrain my tears, but to await in patience their cessation.

As the subject on which I was about to be instructed, and perhaps to express opinions, was of the most sacred nature, I resumed a kneeling posture, as more consonant to the deep sense of ignorance and weakness that pressed me to the earth.

While I was endeavouring to attain composure, the good father raised his head, and addressing himself to me, said : ‘ My child, I am not here to extort anything from you ; you are not in confession ; and I require to hear nothing but what you may voluntarily offer me. Be assured, whatever you may suffer in the communications you make, as the result of a whole winter’s reading and research on subjects totally unfit for you, I who receive them shall suffer more ; for do not my years, my experience, enable me to foresee consequences which your inexperience prevents you from discerning ? Enter then upon the task you have imposed upon yourself with frankness, and let me have the joy of learning, that whatever may be your errors of thought and feeling, they are not of an incorrigible character.’

‘ Will you allow me, good father,’ I replied, ‘ first to inquire of you, whether your opinion of the Bible, as a book for my use, is at all changed since I last heard your sentence on it ?’ He did not reply, and I continued—‘ I find more than ever the want of

that book, good father ; for although I have read many volumes containing allusions to it, and even quotations from it, yet the supply has been too scanty to satisfy my inquiries ; and although I am aware that you consider me as having been seduced from both duty and faith by the perusal of that sacred book, I find myself still yearning for a further knowledge of it.'

'My child,' said the father, in somewhat of a stern voice, 'your words are still wilful. They are a vindication of the wrong for which I have heretofore reproved you, and of that swerving still further from duty which so much alarmed me in our last conference. As a child of the Holy Catholic church, you have no right to ask questions, or to entertain doubts, on points of faith which the church has settled, and of which you require no explanation, but that of your spiritual teachers. I cautioned you in our last interview to beware of yourself; and to suppress that wilful spirit of inquiry which you have shown, and which will inevitably lead you astray.

'Suffer again that admonition, and permit me to say, that although I willingly listen to any inquiry which you may address to me, I cannot allow you to give strength to your errors by a too confident exposition of unauthorized opinions, except in the confessional.'

'Oh, reverend father, it would be impossible for me at this moment to attempt confession, but I am

endeavouring to be as sincere in the expression of my thoughts and feelings as though I knelt before you in the actual performance of it.'

The father bent his head, and said, 'Have you been in possession of the Bible, or perused it at all, since I last prohibited it, my child?'

'No, father; I have not even seen a Bible since that interdiction.'

'So far, well. Yet I must believe from your own expression, that the abstinence has not been voluntary. I would fain hope, however, that the departure of our Protestant inmates may be beneficial to you. But if the Protestant Bible is to replace them, the benefit will be rendered nugatory.'

'Oh, reverend father, speak not reproachfully of the inspired volume, as though it could be a source of evil to any. How shall I describe in adequate terms what only a short and hasty glance at its pages disclosed to *me*. I fear you will think me extravagant when I attribute to that partial acquaintance with it an awakening of my faculties, and an illumination of mind, which to myself seemed almost miraculous.

'What new and different ideas of God did it impart! What new ideas of worship! What revelations of the mysterious relations betwixt God and man! What grand and ennobling thoughts of Him who deigns to call himself 'Our father in heaven!'  
When I think of the duties that must arise out

of this relation, and look around in vain for the inspired page that can alone teach me what they are, and instruct me how to perform them, I feel myself shut out, as it were, from the Divine presence.'

A long pause ensued, during which no word from the father broke the silence that was becoming oppressive, and I proceeded, for my heart was full :—

'If indeed, as you apprehend, I have been seduced from Catholic faith and duty, reverend father, it has been, as I have before said, by the perusal of that sacred book. Yes! if I am indeed a heretic—and the word is one of horror to Catholic ears—it is with reverence I say that the Protestant Bible has made me so. Oh, father! I tremble at what I utter, but such heresy appears to me to be truth.'

'Daughter, is it not irreverent—nay, more, is it not profane—to attribute your wrong views and wrong actions to the Bible? Is it not the misuse and the misinterpretation of it, rather than itself, that has conducted you almost to the verge of apostasy? It is considered by our holy church, when used without restriction and explanation, as a dangerous book, and therefore prohibited. If our own Bible, with all the guards which the church has placed about its contents, be thus dangerous when used without supervision, what may not be said of the Protestant Bible in the hands of ignorance and youth, presented, as that translation is, in all the unmitigated strength of

its original inspiration, without the intervention of an adapted medium ?

‘Father, will you permit me to remark, that our blessed Saviour says, speaking to those around him, ‘Search the Scriptures.’ There seems to be no restriction in this precept. To me, indeed, the Bible appears to have been written for the unlearned, so clear, so simple is its style, that, to use its own expressive words, ‘A wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err therein.’ ’

‘You seem to have perused this book with deep attention, daughter. May I inquire if its intrinsic attraction was unaided by extrinsic influence? Had the Protestant marquis no part in your supernatural illumination, as you have described its effect to be?’

I was so much moved at this sudden and unexpected introduction of Monsieur de Grammont’s name in connexion with a subject so sacred, and yet with which he was so much associated, that for a moment my mind almost lost its balance. But recovering myself, without, as I hoped, betraying emotion, I endeavoured to resume the lofty subject on which we had been discoursing without noticing the attempt of the father to ascertain the state of my feelings towards Monsieur de Grammont. His tone and manner at the moment, in connexion with subsequent occurrences, induced me to suspect he had been commissioned to probe me on this subject. He rose from his seat, took a turn round the room,



and returning to it, visibly disconcerted, said emphatically,—

‘ My child, there are no disguises before God, and there should be none before his minister. Even that sentiment which ‘ many waters cannot quench, or the floods drown,’ is incapable of concealment from him. Bethink you well, then, of the solemnity of your position at this moment, and trifle not with it.’

‘ From Him who sees the thoughts afar off, there can, I know, be no concealment. But I had supposed myself only conferring with a spiritual friend, and not a confessor, at this moment.’

He looked sternly at me, but I continued,—

‘ As you have mentioned Monsieur de Grammont’s name, father, I will not deny that his superior knowledge of the Bible and of religion was kindly employed to enlighten me on those subjects. Yet he did not use his powers to convert me to his own particular faith, although I was childish enough to attempt to proselyte him to mine. But certainly I did so before I had seen that book on which his faith is built.’

‘ Ah, my poor child ! your awakening was, I fear, rather to the love of the creature than the Creator. You have been making ‘an idol, which you have found to be clay.’ This is a folly committed once in their lives, at least, by most human beings. But in your case, your extreme youth is some palliation of it.’

He paused, as if awaiting a reply ; but receiving none, he continued,—

‘ Forget, however, the Protestant Bible, and the seductive hand that has dared to lead you away from your native fold ; and by an adequate amount of penance, you may yet be allowed to return to it, and obtain absolution for your childish wanderings therefrom. Have you not neglected indispensable duties to indulge yourself in reveries and sentiments that are as absurd and injurious as they are unhallowed ? Be more diligent in the performance of your devotions ; try the efficacy of fasts on saints’ days ; but, above all things, forget not your rosary.’

‘ Alas ! father, there is, I fear—and yet I shudder to suppose I am right—no efficacy in the rosary.’

The father quickly turned his eyes upon me with a look of horror. But I was too much frightened to be silent, and I continued—‘ I have tried it so often, without deriving any benefit from it, and it is in itself such a mockery of worship, that I fear prayers so offered can never be acceptable to the Divine Being, though presented, as prescribed by the church, through the mediation of saints or angels.’

‘ What do I hear ! the ordinances of the church contemned by a child of your age ! Forbear, and sin no more ! When I last counselled you, I commended you to the good offices of the holy Mother. Have you sought her mediation ? Have you read the se-

lections and legends I sent you, to enlighten and confirm you in the faith?’

‘Yes, good father, and with an earnest desire to discern and appreciate the instruction therein. But I find the legends absurd,—I fear I shock you, good father, but I have pledged myself to speak truthfully of the new views I entertain, how disparaging soever they may be to myself, or displeasing to you. Many of the legends I find too ridiculous for belief, and the offices and powers conferred by the church on the holy Mother, fabulous, and unsupported by Scripture. The sacred writings, on the contrary, have in them truth and life, and are so entirely different from all other writings which I have yet seen, that they are, to my understanding and my conscience, as the words of the Most High, and seem to have been written by One ‘to whom all hearts are open,’ for they express all my feelings, my desires, my hopes, my fears, my regrets. You speak not, good father. Have I offended you beyond forgiveness? Oh, say not so; but continue to counsel and to bear with me! I have sometimes misgivings of heart, and fear lest I may be under some evil hallucination. Not having the Bible, my ignorance and past habits of thought keep me in a state of perpetual indecision. For what test have I by which to try the new ideas I have received? And had I not gained some little aid and information from the theological authors which my dear father has allowed me to peruse, I fear I might, before this,

have renounced what to me seems to be divine truth for that ease of conscience I was wont to feel before I had learnt that I was, in my own person, accountable to God. But now I feel that I can never return to what appears to me that negation of all true worship, of all common sense, which I have been taught by our church. Or perhaps, father—for I see how I distress you—it may be that I have hitherto been restricted to mere elements in the doctrines of our church; but that in advancing in such knowledge as may now be deemed not unfit for my years, I may be able to reconcile those differences betwixt the Scriptures and the ordinances of the church which at present confound an understanding so partially instructed as mine.'

The venerable father had become so agitated, that supposing he was about to pronounce on me some fearful sentence, I began to be frightened at myself, and awaited his recovery of speech with a beating heart. I still remained kneeling, and he presently became tranquil; when, observing that I was almost in a fainting state, he desired me to rise, saying, as I did so—

'Take a seat, and hear what I have further to say to you. I have listened to you, dear child, with greater pain than I ever before felt in a similar conversation. Not because your errors are more flagrant than those of others, but because they are of a peculiar character in a person so young; being faults of

thought and of opinion, instead of conduct ; and that, too, at an age when you should be listening to the thoughts and opinions of others, instead of forming your own. You have expressed a desire to be able to reconcile the differences that you have discovered betwixt the Scriptures and the ordinances of our holy church. Are, then, those Scriptures so much at variance with our church as to be incapable of reconciliation with it? If so, the sooner you forget them the better. The boundless evidence of both tradition and history is in favour of our church.'

'Do you mean, father, that tradition and history give the church precedence of the Scriptures, and demand for it a prior authority?'

'That is a question of high import. Who shall answer it? May God defend me from so great a presumption as that of attempting it! And you, my child, are you able to answer it? You, whose faculties are but just expanding? You, who, though not uninstructed in history or tradition, are yet unacquainted with both learning and logic? You have, in the rashness of an immaturity, both of years and knowledge, which should have made you diffident, rejected doctrines, and impugned ordinances and practices, dictated by an infallible hierarchy, and sanctioned by a sovereign pontiff, *whom no mortal man may presume to reprehend, forasmuch as he is called God. And he that acknowledgeth not himself to be*

*under the Bishop of Rome, is a heretic, and cannot be saved.\**

‘ Oh, father ! I am, indeed, sensible how much I am of a child, both in intellect and knowledge, as well as in years. But I cannot bow to the ascendancy—amounting to divine—which you claim for the sovereign pontiff, because it makes him equal to God. Yet it appears to me essential to faith that some unerring standard of truth be recognised, to which all human beings might appeal, and to which all should bow. Are the Scriptures or the Catholic church that standard ?’

‘ Daughter, your alienation from our holy church manifests itself in almost every sentence you utter. Return, I beseech you, to the humility and deference essential to your age. Continue your trust in those appointed to direct you, and assume not a responsibility which they are willing to bear for you. Your renunciation of the sovereign pontiff, as the sole arbiter in religious questions, I dare not comment on at this moment, fearing that you may thereby have imperilled your soul. You have spoken of the practices you have been taught in the Catholic religion as ‘ a negation of all true worship, and all common sense !’ I shall, no doubt, be able to clear our church from such imputations ; but this is not the time nor the place.

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\* Canon law of the church of Rome.

‘ Before terminating our present conference, I must tell you, that until you again seek my advice in the confessional, I think it necessary to impose on you the penance of abstaining, not only from the reading of the Scriptures, but of all other theological writings except those which are sanctioned by the church.’

Here the good father ceased to speak. He appeared both agitated and weary, and remained for some minutes leaning on the table in silence.

He then rose, and saying ‘ Farewell, my child !’ hastily left the room.

## CHAPTER VI.

Is not this something more than phantasy !  
 What think you of it ?

SHAKESPEARE.

WHEN the family assembled at dinner, I found amongst them both Father Ossory and the bishop. My uncle had, indeed, been often with us of late, and seemed to have affairs of business with my father, with whom I had observed he was frequently closeted. My curiosity was not excited by this ; but for the first time, on this day I became sensible of a very altered deportment on the part of my dear father, who was indeed dearer to me than I can express.

He who had been wont at table to take part in every pleasant sally of thought, and to enter with ready interest into every subject discussed, performed the honours of his table so silently, mechanically, and even negligently, that it was impossible not to perceive he must either be very unwell or greatly depressed.

I became so restless and distressed at what I saw that I could take no pleasure in anything around me. It was easy to see that even my uncle was



making an effort to appear cheerful, and to converse as usual with Father Ossory.

My mother, spoke only now and then, in undertones, to those who sat next her, while my father helped himself to different dishes, sending each plate away, in succession, without tasting its contents.

As my seat at table was always at his right hand, I had an opportunity of observing him more than any other of the party; and being in the habit of exchanging with him, in the intervals of the dinner, those little fondnesses which might be supposed to pass betwixt such a father and a petted child, I was more affected by his forgetfulness of me on this day than can be imagined.

When my mother and her daughters were quitting the table, my father desired us to take William, who had only returned home on that morning, with us.

Of course, upon this hint he accompanied us to the drawing-room, where we assembled only to sit as it were silent and spell-bound.

My brother, who was evidently not pleased at having been severed by dictation from the society of the gentlemen, began to express wonder at what was the matter with his father. No one ventured to reply to him, for we all seemed to be impressed with the idea that something unusual must have occurred, of so grave a nature as to forbid all frivolous conjecture.

My mother applied herself to netting, but in so

languid and abstracted a manner as to entangle and spoil her work; while my sisters and myself sat apart, exchanging anxious and inquiring looks.

My brother soon left us, when I approached my mother, and throwing my arms around her, coaxed her to tell me what had occurred to disturb my father. She pressed me in her arms, and kissed me, as she said, in a sad, low voice, 'I believe he is troubled about family affairs.'

I observed that her eyes were full of tears, and did not inquire further. But my imagination was on a wide sea of conjecture in a moment.

The utter ignorance in which we had always been kept of all pecuniary matters prevented them from being thought of at this instant. What then could have occurred? My brother had been absent all the winter. Could he again have offended my father? Or was there any breach betwixt my uncle and him? 'But Father Ossory will mediate,' said I, 'and make all right, perhaps to-morrow, and then, the cloud will have passed away.' My hopes were, however, not so strong as my fears, for a presentiment of evil hung over me; and as my sisters were both occupied with books, I had leisure to contemplate my passive, pensive mother, as she continued to do and undo her tangled netting. I contemplated her thus, as I lounged in an arm-chair, in a distant part of the room, longing to see her lift her head and look towards me.

But she remained in motionless abstraction, occupying only her fingers evidently to enable her to conceal her emotions ; which, from whatever cause, seemed quite absorbing. For myself, the more I reflected on the unusual deportment of my parents on this day, the more I became concerned at it. The entrance of the gentlemen, when coffee was announced, suspended my reflections ; and when, after it was taken away, my mother and they formed a party at whist, I felt at liberty to chat awhile with Dora. Caroline had absorbed herself in the book she was reading, and I did not, therefore, interrupt her. Advancing to Dora, who seemed to be turning over leaves without reading, I looked over her shoulder, observing, in a whisper, ' You are a very listless reader. What is your book ? '

' That which you recommended,' she replied. ' Nothing less, forsooth ! than a ponderous ecclesiastical octavo. If you had selected your ' Historical Primer,' or the ' History of Mother Bunch,' it would have better suited me ; as I am in no mood for adding to the penance inflicted by the unaccountable depression so visible both in papa and mamma. Only look ! even now, with the cards in their hands, they seem scarcely to know one suit from another ; but are making revokes and blunders of every sort. What can be the matter ? '

I shook my head ; when she turned to me with a playful air, and said, ' By the bye, little Nelly, did you recommend this leaden history to me with the

pious motive of making me as great a heretic as yourself? I tell you what, little girl, as you are going on, you will get into some dungeon, or niche, of the Holy Inquisition some day or other, if you do not retrace your steps. I am your elder, remember, and have therefore a right to counsel you, so take what I say gravely.'

'Why, Dora,' I replied, 'you sometimes seem to be as much alive to what is absurd in the practices of our church as I am; although you will not consent to its being of sufficient importance to be resisted seriously. Perhaps you do not consider that you are in any way responsible for either the right or the wrong of what has been taught you under the auspices of the priesthood? But do not deceive yourself. After a certain age, if we use not the talents of understanding and judgment bestowed on us by the Creator, we are accountable to him, not only for the omission, but for the errors we fall into in consequence of it.'

'Hey-day, Nelly! where are your cowl and surplice? shall I ring for them? Really, my little preacher, you would find yourself wonderfully improved by them; besides the influence they would give you on your hearers! But don't look so sad and serious. I have not read the Protestant Bible, but I am not more of a true Catholic than you are; for I scarcely give any credence to the dogmas imposed on us by our priestly teachers.'

‘And yet, Dora, you make no opposition to them, nor attempt to replace them in your mind by truth. Do you not continue to perform, with obsequious exactness, all the outward forms prescribed to you, while you disown their meaning? Do you not still bow to sculptured saints, and recite prayers to graven images—which, as objects of worship, you laugh at?’

‘Why, Nelly, do you not see that one must, in common decency, be of some faith; and, of course, that in which one has been born, being ready-made, is the most convenient and the most protective, inasmuch as, being *au fait* in its ceremonies, one can go through them without the trouble of thinking what one is doing; and the profession of any faith, right or wrong, shelters you from impertinent questioning respecting your opinions? I know, from the conversation of half our good Catholics, that they act upon this principle; and thus acting, they eventually become Infidels. But I don’t mean to come to that. I shall do as you have done; read the Protestant Bible, as soon as I can get permission. Meantime, I must conform to what I have been accustomed, that I may get absolution for my occasional peccadillos and heretical conversations with you. Do you think Father Ossory would absolve me, if I confessed to him my scepticism of what he teaches, and pointed out to him the absurdity of making his little ivory or golden gods objects of adoration?’

‘And yet, Dora, I much fear that insincerity in religion is almost an unpardonable sin. It is an insult to God himself, who, whatever the *form* of worship, is supposed to be the object of it.’

‘Oh Helen! now you are too serious. You cannot suppose that I identify the Divine Being with the priest’s bits of stone and metal, or even with canvas and paint, how well soever executed.’

‘Certainly not, dear Dora. Nevertheless, I thought you were speaking rather profanely of even an erroneous worship. Everything relating to God should be uttered with humility by his creatures; and, I fear, we are even now tampering with impiety, in presuming to converse thus on subjects so sacred.’

‘I dare say you are right, Helen,’ said my sister, resuming her book. After a few minutes, she again turned to me, with—

‘You are a very good little poppet, Nelly, but you should not forget that I am your eldest sister, and that I could talk long before you could walk; and although you rather over-top me in stature, you should remember what is due to age. Come, now, that is quite in your own sage and reverent style; and while my gravity lasts, let me ask you, why you did not, when you could, run away with that dear, handsome Protestant marquis? Such a little huguenot as you are ought never to marry a Catholic; and I am afraid you will not again have an opportunity of getting a Protestant husband. Hey, Nelly!

where in the world do those great drops come from that are running down your cheeks? I do believe you are offended at my not asking you to sit down. But come, sit with me in my chair,—‘there’s room for us twa.’ Here, love—put your dear little arm round my neck, and I will put mine round yours, there is nobody noticing us. We will enact the babes in the wood; and if Robin-red-breast should omit to cover us with leaves when we have gone off in a faint, I have no doubt papa and mamma will discover us before morning, and cover us with kisses; and little Carry will sing a requiem—the dirge in *Cymbeline*, as you are fond of that—in her touching way, which will bring us both back to life. But let us not look back, on our return from the Shades! No, no, Nelly, you must not torment yourself for the past. Léonce certainly is gone, but he may possibly be on his way back to us; and I give you notice, that when he does come, I mean to pull caps with you for him. So fine a fellow ought not to be given to a younger sister, while an elder is still a spinster. Depend upon it the practice of the old patriarchs in disposing of elder daughters before the younger was better than ours. Oh Nelly! still crying! I thought you liked the babes in the wood! and that you would be delighted to illustrate them in a *tableau vivant*! You really must compose your spirits, if you mean to succeed, and not break your heart with sobs, and spoil your pretty face with salt and corrosive tears.

Who knows but they may leave traces that can never be effaced? Depend upon it, they are prettier in poetry—

‘Sweet drops of pure and pearly light!’

as they are, than they can possibly be in practice.’

‘Oh Dora! how can you be so unkind and so ridiculous! Do you think tears are ever shed for effect?’

‘To be sure they are, my little greenhorn. Do you suppose we are all as simple and sincere as you are? But I see the shower is over now, and we may speak of husbands without crying; although I am sure *I* have a right to cry, if I chose; for, will you believe it, papa has actually obliged me to refuse our neighbour on the other side the lake, young Sir Lucius Mac Neil, with his fine estates and handsome figure?’

‘Are you quizzing, Dora?’

‘Not a bit, Nelly; it is quite true.’

‘When did it happen?’

‘Some weeks ago.’

‘And you not tell me of it!’

‘Why, indeed, Nelly, I was too vexed to talk about it. But I think papa should have some consideration for our feelings.’

‘Dear Dora, do you really take the thing to heart? Depend upon it, papa has reasons for his refusal which we know not of.’



‘No, no, Nelly, I do not think he has any cause for it but his exceeding fondness for us all. You know that neither he nor mamma can bear to have us out of their sight ; but they should not let pleasant people come amongst us, if we are not to like them, should they? But see, the whist party is broken up, the tray is coming, and we may now retire. Come, let us go to our own room; Caroline is moving, and will go with us. Papa and mamma look very ill; let us inquire if they wish us to stay. Indeed, I feel uneasy at leaving them.’

I crept to my father’s side, and putting my arm in his, asked if he was better.

‘Better! Do not ask me, darling. I cannot talk to you to night. Go to bed, and sleep soundly, that you may rise in health and strength to-morrow. Good night! Helen, go to your uncle for a moment.’

My uncle received me kindly, but gravely; and after a few words with him and Father Ossory, we parted; and kissing our dear mother, we all left the room.

It was early in May, and the evening was chilly; but when we reached our boudoir, an apartment appropriated solely to our use, we found a snug little fire, which my own maid, Mary, expecting us there, had ordered to be made. Nothing could be more comforting than this little provision of brightness and warmth; and as its light was reflected in the china tiles of the fireplace, the whole arrangement

presented so *cozy* and inviting an aspect, that our trio were soon settled round it, with a feeling of satisfaction that portended a long sitting. We remained silent for some time, as if by common consent. There may be cavillers who will doubt the truth of this assertion, in reference to three young girls, in a place where there was no restraint on their loquacity, except, perchance, the seriousness of their own thoughts. Nevertheless, I must assert that it was as I have stated, a fact which will perhaps establish more than the mere possibility of the thing, and prove that the vice of endless talking is a charge unjustly made, when fastened on the whole female world. It must be admitted that the obscure and shadowy aspect of the room was itself calculated to impose silence on us, if we had been at all disposed to be imaginative, especially as we were in the vicinity of some of the deserted, and therefore haunted, chambers of the house.

But we needed not the recollection of this circumstance to aid the exercise of fancy in deciphering the mystic character of the objects around us. The single lamp which lighted the room was hung, in accommodation to a lofty mantelpiece, so far above what it was designed to illuminate, that as its feeble rays fell on the objects around, they might have been supposed shadows, rather than shapes of anything either in 'heaven above, or the earth beneath;' and the fitful gleams of firelight, as they flickered on

their undefined forms, did but mystify them the more, leaving it wholly to the imagination to decide on the region or class to which they pertained.

Charmed by the scope thus afforded to idle fancies, and happy, at this moment, in the society, as well as the silence, of my darling sisters, I know not how long I might have continued to gaze on the tapestried walls, or to invoke their speechless forms, had not Dora broken the spell, by asking me what I thought of the presentiments so much indulged in by French people, and so often alluded to in their conversation.

‘I inquire of you,’ said she, ‘because I know what a fanciful little Nelly you are, and how serious you are in your belief in invisible agency. Even now, as I speak, you look as abstracted as though you were sailing on air, in chase of the moonbeams. Let me beg a gleam for this terrestrial chamber, or I fear we may shortly be unable to discern right from left. I have a dreadful weight on my heart, but I will not call it presentiment.’

‘Do not ask *me*, Dora, for an opinion on what I know nothing. I do not wish to believe in presentiments, because I fear that ‘sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.’ Perhaps I may be thought too young to have arrived at such a conclusion; but I begin to think that the bright morning of life is already past with me, and that I have now only to collect my strength for endurance, not for enjoy-

ment. It is the too happy, if such there are, that love to shade present good with anticipated evil. But I think none of us, at present, require the chastening of evil portents to sober our spirits.'

As we thus trifled on one subject after another, the witching hour approached, and still found us loath to separate. The lamp was nearly spent, and the fire, burnt to a mass of red cinders, no longer emitted a single ray, when a sharp stroke, as of some hard substance, fell twice or thrice on the window. We all rose simultaneously, for we knew that the window was of an inaccessible height from the ground, and quite unapproachable on the outside, except by ladder. Thoughts of many things, which we did not then utter, rushed upon us with lightning speed.

A thick lined curtain was drawn closely across the window, and a Holland blind had been let down over the glass beneath, so that it was impossible the light within could have been visible enough to attract the attention of any one without. We drew back the curtain, shook out its folds, and drew up the blind; but nothing outside was to be seen except a murky sky, and a forest of half-clad trees in the distance. We then examined the apartment, thinking it possible we might have been mistaken, and that the sound might not have proceeded from the window.

With a hand-taper we carefully inspected a large mirror, which hung from the ceiling to the floor, at the bottom of the room. There was no trace of

damage in it, but we shuddered at the sight of our own frightened faces and attitudes, as dimly reflected in it amidst the shadows of the room.

We left the window uncovered, the better to see, as well as to hear, if the attack upon it should be repeated. We were scarcely seated round the fire, when the stroke on the glass, more sharp and loud than before, was again struck two or three times. In a moment we were all before the window, when, to our astonishment, we beheld a large bird, apparently black, facing the window, and flapping his wings violently. But in the twinkling of an eye he flew off with a rapidity that made it impossible to discern the direction he took.

All this had occurred so instantaneously that we gazed mutely on each other for several minutes ; but we had, at any rate, discovered the cause of our alarm, and so far it was satisfactory. The object of the unusual visitant was not so easily ascertained—for although our rookery was not far off, no one of its community had ever before made so bold an advance to acquaintanceship.

We now thought it high time to retire, and rang for the servants, who, on hearing our recital, were blanched with terror. But emotion of any sort is in some degree pleasurable, especially to the untutored mind, which no doubt often grows weary of the narrow bound of thought within which it is confined.

Almost anything, therefore, that breaks the monotony of its ideas, is hailed with cordiality.

It is in human nature to love to look beyond the ken of sense, and thus to be carried out of self ; and in those moments when we feel the dubiousness that hangs over our future, who does not long to pry, if but for a moment, into those invisible things of the creation with which our life is bound up, and to catch a glimpse of the angel's hand that impels or restrains our courses ?

## CHAPTER VII.

What art thou, that usurp'st this time of night !

SHAKESPEARE.

Entreat me not to leave thee, for whither thou goest, I will go.

RUTH.

I WAS fortunate enough, while undressing, to hear Mary's comments on the occurrence of the evening. She was well skilled in the lore of omens, and spoke *solemnly* on all the possible indications of the mysterious visitation. I listened to her with an interest which I should, perhaps, have been ashamed to own on the morrow, if that morrow had risen upon us as all former days had done.

In our times, when rigid research tears open all hidden things—scowling on whatever resists analysis—there is no covert left for anything 'of fancy born;' and the dreams of poets and the abstractions of metaphysicians are cast away, like the idols of an exploded superstition, to 'the moles and the bats.' But I had been rocked in the cradle of legends, and reared in the land of traditionary marvels,—no wonder, therefore, if some of its dreamy creations had established themselves in my brain.

I had just composed myself to sleep, when the

door of my chamber was softly opened, and my sister Caroline, with a taper in her hand, came on tiptoe to my bedside, and bending over me, said, in a hurried whisper—

‘Helen, I could not sleep without coming to tell you that I think I have discovered the cause of papa’s inquietude. Do you remember, one day last summer, when Dora and I were walking in the wood, near the old Tower, how excessively we were frightened, by a woman of a tall and imposing figure, who came suddenly upon us, with menacing looks, and mysterious words about papa and his estates, and her wrongs?’

‘Yes, yes, I remember well.’

‘And how, in our alarm, we gave her money to get rid of her?’

‘Yes, yes, go on.’

‘And how annoyed and angry papa was when we told him of it? He said he knew the ‘demon’ well (that was his word), and would have her expelled from the neighbourhood, and we have never seen her since.’

‘Yes, yes, I know.’

‘Well, I saw her again the other day! She was prowling about the lodge gates, muffled up, as if for disguise, when papa and I came through in the chariot, from our visit at Moor Hall. At the first glance, I did not recognise her, although I remarked to papa what very fierce eyes she had. He looked



out of the window very angrily at her, while the gates were being opened.'

'Well, Caroline,' said I, 'is that all?' somewhat disappointed at her recital, and wondering at her hurried manner.

'All, Helen! Why you seem to think nothing of the re-appearance of that dreadful woman, although I feel sure it is she, who, in some way or other, is the cause of poor papa's annoyance.'

'Nonsense, Caroline! How can you be so fanciful. You call *me* fanciful, but this fancy is absurd. What! to suppose that a wild woman like this can have power to affect our dear father's spirits or interests, is not to be thought of for a moment. While I was speaking, Caroline set down her taper, and moved slowly off to the window at the foot of the room, and drawing aside the curtain, looked for a second or two into the park.'

'Caroline,' said I, 'you will take cold at the window, in that slight dressing gown. Do return to your room, and go to bed; it is already past one o'clock. She made no answer, but beckoning me to her, said, almost in a whisper—

'Put out the light!'

I sprang out of bed, and obeying her directions, was in an instant at her side, and looking into the park in the same direction as herself.

'There—there!' said she, 'before that large fir-tree!' I looked—and at some hundred paces from

the castle, standing on the open lawn, in front of the tree, I beheld a figure perfectly motionless ; and was questioning with myself whether it were a human being or not, when a bright moon emerged from behind a heavy cloud, and its beams falling on the figure, clearly revealed the outline of a very tall female, apparently gazing on the castle. We clung together, in breathless curiosity. The figure came forward a pace or two, and extending its long arms to heaven, began to wave them up and down wildly. This dumb show lasted a minute or two, during which she moved slowly backwards, until we had lost sight of her amidst the shadows of the trees. We continued to watch a few minutes longer, gazing on the spot whence she had vanished ; but she did not return.

‘How strange and frightful!’ said Caroline, still in a whisper, as if afraid to hear her own voice. ‘What can it mean?’

‘She must be insane,’ I replied. ‘But if she be even the woman you suppose, it is utterly improbable she can have any influence upon our household. Ah, no ! Caroline, it is something more serious than that which disturbs papa !’

‘I hope you may be mistaken, dear Helen ! But as for this ‘demon,’ as papa calls her, be she witch or be she banshee, we are united enough to defy her spells.’ And throwing her arms around me, she bade me good-night.

\* \* \* \* \*

On the following morning my sisters and I breakfasted by ourselves ; papa and mamma having ordered their breakfast in their private room. We had scarcely had time to refer at all to the startling occurrences of the last night, when a message by a servant requested me to attend my father, in his study. There was a formality in the manner of this to which I had never been accustomed. Ordinarily, if my father had wished to speak to me alone, he would have come himself to fetch me.

‘How strange!’ said Dora, ‘for neither papa nor mamma to come to speak to us this morning ; especially as we were denied admittance to their room when we knocked at their door to ask how they were. Alas ! there is more in this than we know of, Helen ; and I am sure that you are of the same opinion, with your alternate red and white cheeks.’

I lost no time in reaching my father’s study, where I found him walking up and down the room with an agitated step. Deep thought was on his brow ; but he immediately approached me, and taking my hand, led me in silence to a chair. As he shut the door, and seated himself beside me, I became agitated almost to tears, but resolved on controlling myself, for I was but too sure that my fortitude was about to be tasked to the uttermost, although I had not the slightest perception of what might be the nature of the communication about to be made to me.

My father paused some minutes before he spoke,

but at length said, in a low and feeble voice, 'My dear Helen, I have sent for you here to inform you of something which it is necessary for you to know without delay. I am a most wretched man, and scarcely able to speak of my misfortunes!'

I had already fallen on my knees before him, and taken his hand.

'Circumstances,' he continued, 'of a most painful but imperative nature, compel me to part with you!' He said no more, but covering his face with his hands, rose, and walked to another part of the room.

'Part with me!' I exclaimed, 'part with me!' The words had struck me like a thunder-bolt, and almost stupified me. I loved my father tenderly and dutiously—what could I have done to alienate him from me? 'Why do you part with me, my dear father?' said I, as I approached him, and again took his hand. 'Have I offended you? Oh! what have I done?'

I could no longer restrain my tears. My father looked like one stunned and insensible.

'It was my intention,' he continued, in slow and broken words, 'to have parted with you without the pain of informing you of the circumstances which have made so agonizing a resolve necessary. But I think, my dear child, you are reasonable enough to be entrusted with my confidence; and I hope you will not disappoint me in the expectation I have formed, either of your judgment or your fortitude.

Helen, my love ! you must help me, and save me from sinking under this tremendous trial ! You know how I love you—you are the very darling of my heart—and nothing but the most cruel and inevitable necessity could induce me to take a step that rends my soul ! But you must dry your tears, and try to hear calmly what I have to say, for it must be said.'

He then proceeded to acquaint me, that having for some years been living beyond his income, he had at length become actually in want of funds to discharge pressing debts. His brother, the bishop, had concerted with him, he said, a plan of retrenchment, which he offered to assist by taking me entirely off his hands, and making such provision for me for the future as should make me independent.

Alas ! what a communication for me to receive. It rendered me incapable of reply, and compelled me to be silent upon every objection which my heart was passionately making against this dreadful separation. My father in debt, and unable to disembarass himself but by my banishment, was, after a little reflection, the sole idea that occupied me. Hope, however, sprang up in my heart. It was, it seemed, in my power to assist him, and as if every moment of my stay increased his misfortunes, I was seized with a desire of instant flight.

I begged him to dispose of me in any way that could be serviceable to himself, adding only one con-

dition—that when he should have surmounted his difficulties I might be permitted again to return to that dear home which would ever be to me the brightest spot on earth. ‘We will not talk of that now, my dear child!’ said my father, greatly affected, ‘I had confided in your dutiful and affectionate sentiments in advance, and your present conduct proves that my confidence was not misplaced. And now, my love, we understand each other. The sacrifice only remains to be made by your speedy departure. Your uncle is gone home this morning, but will be here again in a few days. Meantime, for my sake, and for the sake of your dear mother and sisters, command your feelings as much as possible. Your uncle loves you, you are his favourite niece, and he will do everything in his power to render you happy. You will be able to carry on all your pursuits as usual, but under far abler direction if you should wish it. Your uncle will also secure your future independence by the provisions of his will. These are benefits not to be underrated, and I doubt not you will eventually find far greater happiness under your uncle’s paternal protection than you are at this moment disposed to expect. You are not required to forget those you leave, my dear Helen, although I fear you must take of them a long farewell, as one part of my system of retrenchment is to quit Mulgrave Castle, and spend some years on the Continent, perhaps in Germany.’

This last information was far more stunning than the first. To be thus separated, by sea and land, from all I most loved on earth,—to be unable to think of Mulgrave Castle but as deserted of everything that had rendered it dear to me—to be obliged to sever it at once from its association with whatever had blessed my existence, and no longer to find there an occasional home, or even an asylum for my thoughts, during the cruel banishment that awaited me—was too much, even for the fortitude which filial love had inspired. I threw myself into my father's arms, speechless, and gasping for breath. I heard his deep and stifled sobs as I lay on his breast, and I know not how long these moments of bitter feeling might have lasted, had not my father endeavoured to shorten them by disengaging himself from me, and begging me to leave him.

‘Allow me to stay but one moment longer,’ said I; ‘on my knees, I entreat that I may accompany you to the Continent. I want nothing—I never *shall* want anything that you have not to bestow. I renounce my uncle's proffered wealth, and everything else that must banish me from the society of my parents and sisters.’

‘You will ruin me, Helen!’ exclaimed my father, in a tone of grief and alarm. ‘Do you imagine this sacrifice is greater for you than for me? There can be no comparison in our sufferings. But it is a matter of necessity, and must be submitted to. Your

uncle's assistance is indispensable to save me from instant disgrace, and it would be an outrage on him to decline the generous proposals he has made to benefit you.'

What could I reply to this? I had now wrung from my father the full extent of his humiliations. I had caused him to suffer more than was necessary. Yet I felt my repugnance and my terrors again coming on me, and to spare for the moment both him and myself, I kissed his hand in token of submission, and hurried from him.

I soon reached my own room, and locking my door, abandoned myself to the agony of my feelings. But in solitude we acquire courage—reason and fortitude assume there their legitimate empire; the influence of the senses, those constant traitors to the mind, is there suspended; and the good and evil of life, stripped in part of their illusions, are reduced in magnitude.

I made my appearance at dinner with far more composure than I had expected. We were without guests; but it was a wretched meal, where every one was absorbed in the same painful subject, and none of us dared to raise our eyes, lest we might encounter looks that must rob us of our self-control.

When the servants had withdrawn, and my father endeavoured to break the oppressive silence by mentioning with tranquillity our approaching separation, all the assumed composure of my mind forsook me,



and it was fortunate for us all that my mother, by instantly rising, broke up the party. I saw that her heart was ready to break; tears fell from her eyes, and she moved with such faltering steps that, as I endeavoured to support her, her appearance quite subdued me. As she seated herself in an easy chair in the drawing-room, I placed myself on a low stool at her feet.

She was never in the habit of leading a conversation; but at this time, as I looked up in her face, she took my hand, and said 'I have learned what a good girl you were this morning, in papa's study, and I feel proud of my daughter's heroism. I wish, my darling, I had a little of your courage myself. I am ashamed to think how much our family misfortunes weigh me down, considering that this kind of calamity is always taking place in life. But to those who suffer for the first time, I suppose, it always appears as though none had ever suffered so much before. Dora and Caroline, why are you so far off? Come to this part of the room—more into our circle. Let us keep together while we can.'

My sisters were sitting apart, shedding silent tears at a distance; but at this invitation they sprang instantly towards us, and kneeling before my mother, seemed to await some communication from her. But no one spoke, and I broke the silence by exclaiming—'Yes, we are indeed wretched! And yet you, my dear sisters, have comparatively little or no

cause for being so. The state of papa's finances is certainly humiliating and distressing to us all; but it is I who am the victim!' And I covered my face with my hands, in deep anguish.

'Dearest child,' said my mother, 'you must not talk thus. I have but this moment praised your heroism, and has it already forsaken you?'

'Oh mamma! if I had no more to lose than you and my sisters have, you should not hear me complain. *You do not lose each other.*'

'What do you mean, love?' said my mother.

'Dearest mother, are not you and my sisters, although you leave home, going away together? You go amongst strangers, and must dispense with the comforts of home; but you will still enjoy each other's society, and be introduced to new scenes, under the endearing auspices of him whom we all so much love. While I,—bereaved on all sides,—severed at every point from every thing I have loved, and left alone in the world—what will become of me? Where may I turn to look for the dear lost ones? Oh, mother! said I not truly, that it is I who am the victim?'

My mother did not reply, but she wept. . After a pause, Dora said, while her eyes were still streaming,—

'You must not run on in this way any longer, Helen. We shall all render ourselves *non compos*, if you do, and be fit only for a lunatic asylum.'

'Besides, my love,' said my mother, taking cou-

rage from Dora's tone, 'you seem entirely to have forgotten your good uncle, and all the advantages of his house and circle.'

'Ah, mother! do not mention them. My uncle is almost a stranger to me; and for his circle—I shall never wish to know any one when you are all gone.'

After a silence of several minutes, Caroline threw her arm round me, and whispered,—

'Try, dearest Helen, to forget awhile this dreadful parting. Let us talk of something else. Mamma will, I am sure, tell us something more than we already know of that *demon-woman*, as papa calls her, who haunts his steps, and is seen in the park by night as well as by day.'

My mother heard her remark, and said,—

'I cannot satisfy your curiosity, my dear, as I know very little of the woman. Perhaps you already know that she was your papa's foster-sister, and that she is suspected of having, by means of her early familiarity with the intricacies of the castle, committed a robbery, from a private closet, of jewels of immense value. She would not for a moment be allowed to remain in this neighbourhood, were it not that her mother, though yet living, is evidently approaching her end; and your kind father does not like to deprive the old woman of her daughter's services at such a time. The subject has always been a disagreeable one to me, and the recollection

of your brother's conduct in that quarter, some time since, renders it doubly so.'

My mother, rising as she said this, left the room to seek my father. I accompanied her to his study door, where, hearing Father Ossory's voice, I did not enter, but returned to my sisters, who were still talking of the stolen jewels. I was surprised to find that although I knew nothing of the affair, Dora was fully informed on it. She laughed at my ignorance, and attributed her own superior information on the subject to her preference of walking the earth, rather than like me, as she said, of soaring above it.

'We little thought last night,' said she, 'when we were exploring the boudoir for cracked glass, that until very lately an invaluable casket had been enclosed in a cupboard behind the tapestry. But so it was. It seems that the casket contained jewels of large value, some of them in very splendid antique settings. They had been treasured by our ancestors for some generations, and were bequeathed by our paternal grandfather to papa. At the time of his coming into possession of this casket, he had an ample revenue, and therefore thought not of the pecuniary value of it; but after examining its contents, placed it in an iron cupboard which is within a closet behind the tapestry of our boudoir. Papa finding himself lately somewhat embarrassed in his finances, thought of the casket. Indeed, it would seem that he had always considered it as a sort of

boundless resource, which rendered it unnecessary for him to think of such economies as are wont to interest other people.'

'Oh, Dora, Dora! can nothing make you serious?'

'Yes, my dear,—the empty cupboard,—which, when papa visited it some few months since, he found utterly guiltless of the casket. Nor could he recollect within a year when he had last seen it, or whether he had ever changed its place of deposit. Our two uncles have been consulted about it, but they can afford no aid, either in information or suggestion.'

'And is that the casket of jewels,' I inquired, 'which that woman is supposed to have stolen? What ground is there for suspecting her?'

'The insinuations of her own mother,' replied Dora, 'made to papa when she was under the fear of death. Mere hints; but upon such hints he, of course, questioned her closely. He could, however, extort from her nothing explicit. At the time she made this disclosure, her daughter Brian was absent in Dublin, whither she had gone with her two daughters. She has since returned, as you and Caroline can attest, if it be allowable to attest by the light of the moon.'

'Has she been charged with the robbery?'

'No; it would be useless to do so at present, as her mother is, as yet, the only witness against her; and she will not swear to any fact, thinking that she

has cleared her conscience by the hints she has given. But Brian is aware that she is suspected, and sets no bounds to her menaces of revenge.'

'Yet, Dora, what power can she possess to injure papa?'

'Only that, Nelly, which a malevolent disposition and an indomitable *will* supply; and when you add to these a total want of principle, her power is hardly to be despised. The theft of the casket, too, is not the only wrong she has committed against papa; although the foster-mother, who is supported entirely by him, professes as devoted an attachment to him as persons standing in such relation to their patrons are wont to entertain.'

Dora proceeded to tell me that the stolen jewels were so remarkable in beauty, as well as in size, that there was every probability they would, some time or other, re-appear, and be identified.

'It is my father's intention,' she said, 'to proceed to the Continent, by way of London, in order that he may there consult the higher functionaries of the police department. Meanwhile, every project and movement of his, by some unaccountable means, has become known to this woman; and he is, in consequence, continually receiving letters from her, full of mysterious maledictions and prognostics, which are couched in language as powerful as it is arrogant. Her talent in letter-writing is indeed, I am told, quite remarkable. It is thought, from her excessive

daring, that she must have some legal adviser, or perhaps accomplice; the value of the jewels being great enough to purchase the assistance of any professional man unprincipled enough to engage in such an enterprise.'

As we continued talking of this affair, we could not but perceive how fatally unfortunate it was that, at such a moment, there should be so much in the pecuniary position of our dear father to depress and distract him. His going abroad, too, would be greatly against the chances of his succeeding in the recovery of the jewels, or in detecting the author of the theft.

Reluctant to separate, my sisters and I remained together until near midnight, unaware of the lateness of the hour, until we rose to go to our chambers.

The maids, when they made their appearance, looked like frightened ghosts; so faltering, so pale, and so wild, that we perused afresh in them the calamitous disclosures of the day.

I was soon in bed, but not before hearing from Mary some of the kitchen legends of the secret passages and haunted chambers of the castle.

Sleep, however, is never far from the young, even under the saddest feelings; because in them the physical nature, fatiguing itself with tears and lamentations, soon sinks under their exhaustion.

## CHAPTER VIII.

Deep night, dark night, the silent of the night,  
 The time of night when Troy was set on fire ;  
 The time when screech-owls cry, and ban-dogs howl,  
 When spirits walk, and ghosts break up their graves,  
 That time best suits the work we have in hand.

SHAKESPEARE.

I KNOW not how long I had been asleep, when I dreamt that I saw a female figure standing within the curtain, at the right side of my bed. She was habited in a loose white dressing-gown, and her head was muffled up in wrappers. In her left hand she bore a lamp, and in her right, some glittering instrument, which I thought was a dagger or a knife. I had but just fully detected her outline, when she cowered over me ; drawing up her arm, at the same instant, into a menacing attitude, as if about to plunge the weapon into me. In a moment, I felt myself to be in a sitting posture, and making a spring at the hand which held the weapon, grasped one of its fingers, with which I grappled so as to ward off the stroke. The struggle lasted but a second, her arm being suddenly struck down by some one at the foot of the bed. I cast a glance towards



my deliverer—the lamp fell from the woman's hand—but before it was extinguished, I had discerned the features of Léonce de Grammont.

I instantly awoke, but in such an extremity of terror, that I buried my head in the bed-clothes, lest I might, with my waking sight, behold the terrific being from whom I had just escaped. When I had in some degree recovered from my agitation, I sat up in bed, to assure myself that the frightful vision I had seen was but a dream, and that I was safe in my own room.

The moonlight, as I had so often seen it, was streaming in, through the half-open curtain, at my window. Some loose branches of ivy that crept round the frame were nodding in the night breeze, and their shadows dancing on the floor. While thus recognising, with delight, these dear, and well-known objects, together with the old oak wardrobe—the picture over the mantel-piece—and the crucifix beneath it—and stretching out my hand to feel the thick crimson curtain round my bed, that I might assure the sense of touch as well as that of sight—I was startled by a slight noise in a corner of the room, near my bed. It was like the click of a lock, but as I knew there was no door there, I thought it could not be that. I then held aside the curtain at the head of my bed, and took a deliberate view of the spot whence the noise had proceeded.

There was no repetition of it, and I lay down,

but continued watching the pretty bending and waving of the ivy at the window.

Presently, I heard again, another movement in the same corner of the room. I did not move, however ; but chancing to cast my eyes on a large cheval-glass which stood in view, opposite to the disturbed corner, I saw reflected in it the figures on the tapestry, which appeared to me to be moving. A terrible idea glanced across me, that my brain was disordered, and that the frightful dream from which I had so recently escaped, was but a symptom of it. I lifted my heart in supplication to God !—Still, I continued gazing fixedly on the cheval-glass, and felt sure that I was under no delusion, when I saw the tapestry slowly lifted up, and after the lapse of a second, a tall figure, in long white garments, emerge from beneath it. My blood froze in my veins—but I was sufficiently in my senses to know, or rather to feel, that the being I saw reflected in the glass, whether real or spiritual, was actually within a few feet of me, and that I had only to tear aside my curtain to be face to face with it !

While these thoughts paralysed every limb, the reflection in the glass disappeared, by the retreat of the figure into a deep shadow, through which it glided noiselessly along the side of the room, until it was lost in a recess behind the cheval-glass. But in a moment, it was again in sight—there—crossing the room, and standing in the moonlight ! Again it

moved, until it came to my toilet-table—before which it stood, for an instant only—but that instant restored to me my wandering senses, for I saw the figure take up a crucifix which lay on the table, and kiss it.

It was then no dream—no illusion of the brain—but some living, real, being, was in the room with me. Of that I felt certain. There it was again!—retracing its steps—passing through the moonlight—and back again behind the cheval-glass, and through the deep shadow, towards the corner of the room where it first appeared. It was then again coming near to me—for the head of my bed, stood against the tapestried side of the room, through which it had entered.

Unable any longer to bear the horror of my feelings, I tore aside the bed-curtain, and cried out, in a loud voice, ‘Who’s there?’ The figure paused, then moved rapidly, but still noiselessly, onwards. It had reached the corner, and raised the tapestry, when I sprang out of bed, and with one bound gained the spot as the tapestry fell at my feet!

My first impulse was to lift the tapestry, and follow that which had disappeared behind it; but the recollection of my dream palsied my limbs. The glittering weapon hung over me!—and the figure that held it, as it appeared to me in my sleep, resembled that which had just passed through my room. ‘Yet I was certainly now wide awake? Shall I ring

the bell? No; I will run to my father's room. There must be, behind this tapestry, one of those secret passages of which Mary was discoursing last night.'

Quick as thought, I threw on a dressing-gown that lay on a chair, opened my door softly, and, changing the key to the outside, locked it after me. I felt now comparatively safe; and stood still for a moment to listen, before I entered on the long dark corridor through which I had to pass. On each side of it were the doors of unoccupied rooms; and at its extremity a tall Gothic window, from which the moonlight was faintly visible, through its coloured glass. I began to move swiftly over the floor: there was no sound, save of my own almost noiseless step, and I longed to escape the horrible loneliness around me; but my breathing became so difficult, that I was obliged to slacken my speed.

Having passed by the doors of my sisters' sleeping-rooms without entering, I had still another gallery to pass through before I could reach my father's room. But it must be done, and I endeavoured to hasten on.

Before I had gone many steps, I heard a sound as of a door falling gently to, in the gallery in which I was. I stood still—'It must be the door of the boudoir.' I knew well the sound of it, as one of its hinges was loose. All the mystery of the casket and the secret closet rushed upon my memory; I must, however, pass that door to gain my father's room, which was

beyond it. 'Yet some one must be at this moment in the boudoir!' I leant my head against the wainscot for support, and tried to restrain my throbbing pulses. Everything was again as silent as the grave; and taking fresh courage, I bounded on, without daring to look towards the boudoir, and reached my father's door. It was not locked; and entering softly, I turned the key on the inside, and sank, nearly fainting, on the floor.

There was a light burning, and my mother and father, whom sad thoughts had kept awake, knew me instantly. They both anxiously demanded what was the matter. My story was soon told, and seemed to them so utterly incredible, that they endeavoured to persuade me the whole affair had been a dream, from first to last. But when I mentioned the sound of the closing door of the boudoir, which could be no fancy, my father seemed struck with a sudden thought, and desired me to pass into my mother's dressing-room, and wait there while he dressed.

My mother joined me there, and provided me with additional clothing, for I was shivering with cold. She also hastily dressed herself; and in a few minutes we were all moving rapidly along the corridors, through which I had just passed.

Arrived at the door of the boudoir, my father fastened it by turning the key on the outside, and we hastened on to my room, where we found everything as I had left it. My father examined every

closet and recess, but finding nothing unusual, said to me in an under-tone, half-smiling, 'Where did your ghost disappear?'

I showed him the spot. 'Hold the taper, love, while I lift the tapestry.'

He did so, and instantly asked, 'Can there be a door here?'

My mother and I took the tapestry from his hand, and held it up, while he examined the wainscot behind it, which he found panelled with oak; but could discern no inequality to indicate a door. He took the light from me, and, passing it up and down in close inspection, perceived a small round mark, resembling a knot in the wood, which, on observing that it protruded, he instantly pressed. A door flew open, disclosing a dark narrow passage, apparently only wide enough for one person, and the extremity of which we could not discern.

'My dear Dora,' said my father to mamma, in a whisper, 'remain here with Helen: lock yourselves in, while I go on and search this mysterious passage, of which, I confess, I have been till this moment utterly ignorant.'

'My dear father,' said I, 'you must not go alone; we will go with you; we cannot be separated from you at such a moment.'

'Helen is right,' said my mother.

My father yielded, that no time might be lost. Then, holding the light high above his head, in order

to throw a gleam on the distance, went forward, my mother and I following closely, with my night-taper, which I had lighted, from my own room.

We went on without any interruption or sound, save our own footfalls, the passage winding about, and taking apparently the outline of rooms around which it ran. The ceiling here and there was very low, so that we were obliged to stoop as we went. At length we came to a point where a diverging passage became visible, which was approached by a descent of a few steps. Here we halted, uncertain whether to try it, or continue in the one in which we were. After a momentary debate we decided on the former, and, descending the steps, had not proceeded many paces when we were arrested by a small door across the passage, resembling that behind the tapestry in my room. Already initiated in the secret of the spring, my father soon opened it, and we found ourselves in a large room, the dimensions of which were lost in the far-off gloom. My father, after examining it in silence, said the apartment was entirely new to him, as, although he remembered having heard of such a chamber when he was a child, he had never seen it; nor had he known in what part of the castle it was to be found.

He had, indeed, long accustomed himself to think that its existence was a mere legend, more fictitious than real. But, now that he saw it, it recalled to his memory a domestic tragedy of which this chamber was

said to be the scene. The room, he believed, had been one of the principal receiving-rooms of the mansion, which, indeed, the style of its furniture and decorations indicated. But after the deplorable occurrence which he had just mentioned, it had become so fearful to our ancestors who then occupied the castle, that they had had it sealed up by invisible doors, so as to close it in, and entirely isolate it from the rest of the building. No wonder therefore, that in the lapse of two generations, the remembrance of it had become a far-off vision, that seldom recurred either to memory or fancy. 'It is, however,' said he, 'but too evident that while the principals of the house had lost both sight and knowledge of it, it has been resorted to by some mysterious beings for purposes of their own.'

Although we had not been five minutes in this chamber of guilt, which the spirits of the past might be supposed to haunt, we began to feel the air so damp and chilly as to thicken our respiration. We nevertheless made the circuit of the room, my mother and I clinging fast to my father.

We found the furniture in a style which indicated it to be at least a hundred years old, the texture and fashion of the window curtains and chair covers bearing also the same date. These were all dropping to pieces, and their apparently once gay colours all but extinct from dust and damp, while the original crimson and gold hangings on the walls hung in



spectral forms, revealing large masses of the wainscot behind.

In short, the whole apartment was a frightful ruin, and connected with the idea of crime, inspired thoughts that made me afraid to turn my head. We were just moving towards the door by which we had entered, and which my father had taken care to leave open, lest the spring might prove intractable on the inside, when a faded crimson cloth, that seemed to cover some article which lay on a pier-table, caught my father's eye, and going up to it, he lifted the cover; but how unutterable were our feelings as we saw there the large and exquisitely-wrought casket, now empty, but which had heretofore contained the vanished jewels! Its presence here was at once a full revelation of the use which had been made of the secret passages, and of this chamber. Nor was it scarcely less complete in its indication of the author of the theft, and of those mysteries and movements often heard by night, which had been disturbing the house and distracting my father's mind for some time past.

We all thought at once of the 'demon-woman,' and leaving the casket where we found it, quitted the apartment precipitately, hearing, as we thought, a movement in the passages. Pulling softly the door behind us as we returned to the passage, we crept silently along, until we had gained the main route, along which we proceeded, still as silently, until we

again reached a door that lay across our path. Before my father put his hand upon it, he said, in a low voice, 'As I know not what this may open upon, nor whom we may meet here, I caution you both against surprises. Hold up your taper, Helen, that we may see what is before us.' I obeyed, and he approached the door, which, to our surprise, was ajar. On throwing it open, and proceeding a few steps, we found ourselves in a large closet, the shelves of which were crowded with an immense variety of articles that appeared to have been placed there for safe-keeping.

'Ah!' exclaimed my father, 'now I know where we are! It is even as we have concluded. Had I known of this entrance before, and could have supposed that that demon had at any time access to this house, all that has occurred might have been prevented!'

My dear father was greatly agitated, but we did not linger; and passing through the closet to the door of exit, with which he was familiar, and of which he had the key in his pocket, he found it, like its opposite, by which we had entered, standing slightly ajar. We neither of us spoke, but exchanging glances, my father pushed it open, when we found ourselves in a small room that I seemed to recognise. I looked round it for a moment in astonishment. It was the boudoir!—*our* boudoir—as my sisters and I were wont to call it. On passing further into the room, I perceived that what I had always supposed

to be only a large mirror, in an ebony frame, hanging from the ceiling to the floor, was in fact the very door through which we had just entered !

My mother smiled at my looks of wonder, as of course she was already acquainted with this secret, and, as well as my father, thought that the mirror was the only door of entrance to the private closet. My mother seemed quite exhausted ; and throwing herself into a chair, expressed a hope that our search, at least for the night, was ended.

‘ Indeed,’ said she, ‘ I know not how it is possible for us to get further ; for if you recollect, we turned the key of the door of this room on the outside, when we passed through the gallery ?’

While she spoke, my eye glanced at the table in the centre of the room ; and my attention was arrested by a group of things on it not familiar to me. A closer survey revealed to us a dark lantern, in which was a wax candle. By the side of it lay some shavings, a bundle of matches, and a tinder-box. Here, too, was my own ebony crucifix, which, by the moonlight, I had seen the figure that stalked through my chamber in the early part of the night take from my toilet-table and lift to its lips.

My father saw nothing of all this. He was stooping to examine the floor with a light in his hand. He started—and raised himself quickly up. As he did so, my attention was riveted by observing him cautiously move to the fire-place, and deposit the

candle, he held on the corner of the grate. He then stood still, silently gazing on the floor with clasped hands; then, covering his face, remained several seconds in silence. As he looked up, he was so ghastly pale that I moved quickly towards him, to inquire if he was ill. My mother, too, who had observed what was passing, came across the room to us. My father threw his arms around us both, and for a moment wept convulsively.

‘My dear father,’ I exclaimed, ‘why are you thus? I am sure you must be ill! Let us get back, without delay, to your chamber.’

‘Hush! speak not,’ said he. ‘Life or death hangs on a sound! Oh, where are my senses?’

I thought him seized with delirium, and felt ready to expire at the idea; when he whispered distinctly and closely into my ear, ‘Helen, I fear the effect upon your mother of what I must nevertheless speak to her, as well as to you. If you have courage in your heart, muster it all! Some incendiary has plotted to set fire to the castle; to this room in which we stand; to the passages by which alone we may be able to escape. How am I to tell this to your mother?’

I felt as he paused that my suspicion of his delirium was confirmed. But I had not a moment to ask myself what I should do for him or for ourselves, for pointing to the floor, he again whispered,—‘See! Helen, and do not start at what I tell you: I know

you have a firm heart,—that floor within the passages and in this room, is covered thick with gunpowder, and unless we can avert it, the whole building will shortly be in flames! Our minutes are numbered! Listen! are there not steps?—perhaps those of the incendiaries in the corridor!’

I stepped quickly to the table to get my taper, that I might examine the floors, and convince myself of what he had asserted. He saw my purpose, and seizing me with a rapid grasp, withheld me; extinguishing at the same moment the taper in my hand.

‘Do you not know that one spark would fire the whole train? See! here are wisps of straw, and there are shavings, regularly laid at intervals! How we have already passed through those passages with naked lights in our hands, and escaped destruction, is indeed a miracle!’

My mother had been clinging closely to him, and had heard enough of what he had said aside to me to comprehend our situation. She expressed no fear, she uttered not a sound, but looked deathly pale, and repeatedly crossed herself.

‘This lantern and these matches,’ said my father, as he surveyed the table, are but accessories to the plot. ‘Softly! softly! the least sound might accelerate our destruction!’ Then again he covered his face with his hands.

I can never forget the feelings of that moment,

standing as we did, on the brink of a fate so dreadful; my mother and I gazing at each other with clasped hands, and nearly lost to consciousness. Yet it was but for a moment. My father recovered his presence of mind, and assuming a look of tranquillity, spoke so assuringly and so calmly as to recal our fleeting senses.

‘That lantern,’ said he, ‘is invaluable, it will enable us to pass in safety over the destruction beneath our feet!’

It was but the work of an instant to seize it—light the candle within—and close it.

‘Now, my brave darlings! as we cannot escape from this room by the door which opens on the corridor, and which my own unfortunate hand locked on the outside, we must return back through the secret passages.’

Familiar with the spring of the mirror-door, my father flung it open. We were already in the closet. He turned the light to the secret door (which we had shut after us as we came through) to search for the spring. He could nowhere find it. He passed his hand over every part of its surface. Nothing was there to indicate it.

‘Are we shut in by this door also!’ said my father, with gestures of the most poignant distress. ‘We must return!—and what then?’

My mother, who had been revived by the words of hope which he had previously uttered, now ex-

claimed, with imploring looks—‘Oh try! try once again! Oh Dora! Caroline! what will become of you!’

My father still stood at the door, repeating his fruitless efforts, when we heard a slight sound in the boudoir.

‘Hark!’ said my father, in a hurried whisper, ‘I hear a movement at the door!’

There could be no mistake, the key was cautiously and slowly revolving in the lock.

Quick as thought my father was in the boudoir. We rushed breathlessly after him, and saw him seize the handle of the door. It was forcibly held on the outside. There was a violent struggle,—‘Help! help! Helen,’ cried my father, in a tremendous voice. I grasped with both hands the partly opened door. One moment, success was with *us*—the next—with our adversaries! and there was gasping for breath on both sides. Life or death was in the struggle! Another superhuman effort on our side, and my father and I fell back, with the door in our hands!

In a moment he was on his feet again, and had rushed out into the corridor. He called to us to follow, and we kept up with him, in full pursuit of retreating footsteps, along the corridors, down the back stairs, through the kitchen passages, and out to a door that led into a court-yard; which, before we could reach it, was violently banged to. My father wrenched it open just in time to descry two

figures in rapid flight through an opposite doorway in the court-yard. He would have pursued them on the instant, but the gunpowder track reached to the very sill of the doorway at which we stood, and we knew not but some hidden accomplice might yet be lying in wait, to put the finishing stroke to the plot, by firing the train at its extremity.

There was a large fierce dog in the yard, furiously barking as we made our appearance, and leaping about at the extremity of his chain, as if he wished to take part in the fray. My father stooped down, set him free, and showing him the track of the flying figures, although they were already nearly lost in the darkness, cried, 'Hie on, Rover! After them! Seize them, my brave fellow, and bring them back!' Off went the noble animal, swift as the wind, leaping over fence, paling, and every other impediment. We watched him until his outline was no longer visible, although we could still hear his loud deep voice booming on the morning air.

This done, we turned to looked at and embrace each other, which we did, with the most fervent love and gratitude to Him who had preserved us through such a night.

My mother, unable to support herself any longer, was nearly fainting, and my father observing it, caught her in his arms, as if she had been an infant, and instantly bore her to her own chamber. I remained to keep watch until his return, with the lantern in my



hand, which we had so providentially found, and which had enabled us to discern what otherwise we must have waited for the light of day to reveal, in that department of the house in which I now found myself. As I stood at the open door, on gunpowder, with my senses in quickened action to observe and listen, I could not but feel my position, alone as I was, and distant from help, to be somewhat terrific. Nevertheless, as the eastern horizon stretched out before me, displaying the peculiar beauties of that twilight hour, I felt emotions of unutterable pleasure. The sun was not yet visible, but the rosy fingers of dawn had streaked the sky with a faint but sure line of promise; and the morning star, with more than its usual lustre, was in advance, to lead the march of light, in chase of that night of darkness already beginning its flight.

My father seemed long in returning; but at length he came, telling me he had roused Dora, and sent her to her mother, not daring to ring for a single servant, lest a lighted candle might be brought through the lobbies and staircases, which were probably all laid with gunpowder.

‘Go you, my darling, to your own bed, or you will be ill.’

‘I cannot leave you, dear father, until the sun has risen and lighted the interior of the house. We know not who may yet be lurking in some hidden corner; you must, therefore, allow me to hold my

office of lamp-bearer a little longer, and accompany you through the castle.'

'Helen,' said my father, 'I feel as though I ought to bless you with more than a father's blessing this morning. You have been the saviour of our house. Good God! how strange, how inexplicable it has all been!'

When my father had done everything to secure the safety of the castle for at least a few hours, I retired once more to my own chamber, to lie down again, where I had so lately lain under the influence of inexpressible terror.

Before I retired to rest, Rover, the dog, had returned unsuccessful from his pursuit of the flying incendiaries, except that he had brought in his mouth the skirt of a man's black coat, which he must have torn off with his teeth, and which he laid down at my father's feet as his trophy.

When I went to my chamber, my father, being uneasy respecting the door behind the tapestry, wished to make it secure for the instant by nailing it; but wanting the means to do so, he placed Rover in the secret passage, and desired him to guard the door; an injunction which the animal seemed well to understand, for he laid himself down instantly at it. With this guard, I had slept undisturbed.

But in the morning, the instant there was a movement in my chamber, the animal began to let me know that he was there, by an occasional low bark

and scratching at the door. Mary, meanwhile, who had flown at the sound of my bell, was already with me, congratulating me, with strong emotion, on the escape we had all had from the dreadful fate which had been prepared for us. She wondered much how I could return to sleep in a room which had been the scene of such fearful occurrences; and when the dog scratched again at the door behind the tapestry, she was startled to such an extremity, that to relieve her fears I opened the door, and brought him into the room. The animal was delighted at being released; and wagging his tail, and looking intelligently up in my face, seemed to ask me if he had done his duty.

Of course, I gave him his meed of praise, upon which he frisked about with such extreme vivacity, that my poor Mary was again very uneasy, and I desired her to open the door and let him pass down stairs. But he seemed to know that his mission was not yet fulfilled; for he turned from the open door, and taking the track of the phantom of the night, walked slowly the whole length of it, with his nose to the ground, uttering every now and then a half bark, until he stood still at the tapestry door; then, seeing that I did not attend to his indications, he came up to me, and taking me by the skirts, led me back through the track, in which he had just been, where I found, not without fresh terror, gun-powder strewed the whole way. Both Mary and I were greatly affected, and well disposed to caress the

intelligent and wonderful animal, so sagacious and so useful, and so little less than human. But he was too large and too boisterous for a lady's chamber, and now, quite as willing to go as we were to let him pass out of the room, he darted off in an instant. Mary had a thousand things to tell me when the dog was gone, in whose presence she had seemed under some restraint. She informed me that there was already a guard of soldiers patrolling round the castle and grounds, with a sentinel stationed at every door.

‘Where did they come from?’

‘From a barrack not far off, ma’am. My master, Sir William, sent off one of the grooms, on the fleetest horse in the stables, with a note to the commanding officer, informing him of our situation, and the men, who are cavalry soldiers, were sent off here immediately. The old woman, Sir William’s foster-nurse, died about an hour ago. My master saw her in time, I believe, to get some information from her. There were two constables sent off after the daughter and her accomplice, who, they say, is the parish priest, just as I was coming up stairs. The men were mounted on Sir William’s horses, and two cavalry soldiers went with them. I assure you, ma’am, I am quite bewildered with the bustle, and the running here and there, in and out of the house—Sir William is all life and fire, and the quickest amongst us. ’Tis surprising

what he has gone through since you retired, ma'am.' Mary continued her narrative; telling me of my father's visits to the servants' sleeping rooms before daylight, to forbid either fire or candle to be lighted in any part of the castle, until they received permission from himself to do so.

'He ordered them all,' said she, 'to assemble in the servants' hall at half-past four, there to receive from him more particular directions. They were all there to the moment, though it was scarcely daylight. First there was, of course, Mrs. O'Connell, the housekeeper; then our four selves, ma'am—the ladies' maids, you know. We stood with her. Then the butler, the valets, the coachmen, the footmen, the postillions, the cook and kitchen-maids and housemaids, the grooms and helpers, the gardeners, and I don't know how many more, ma'am; for I was hardly myself, having been waked so early, and so frightened to hear what had happened, and might have happened, but for your dream and ghostly visitor, ma'am, which called up Sir William and my lady, and showed them the danger we were all in. Oh, ma'am, what a wonderful thing! Surely the angels must have been busy last night in our castle, to save it from the plots of that wicked woman—for I will never believe it to have been anybody but her. But I was speaking of the meeting, ma'am, in the servants' hall. It was solemn to hear our dear master, Sir William, telling of our danger;

though to be sure he said very little. But he said that he wished there might be no misrepresentation of what had occurred, and therefore he had spoken to them himself. He then called Mrs. O'Connell aside, and talked to her for a little while, after which she sent off half-a-dozen housemaids, and others, to clear away the gunpowder from every part of the house; and we all thought there hadn't been a single grain of it left anywhere when I came up here. How shocked they will all be in the house-keeper's room to hear that it has been laid here, on the floor of my own dear Miss Helen's room. Surely, that must have been what she came for when she walked through your room last night, ma'am! After the castle had been thoroughly cleansed, Sir William again went over it, to assure himself, as he said, that everything was safe. He then told Mrs. O'Connell she might give her orders as usual; the fires were soon lighted; and by this time, ma'am, breakfast must be nearly ready—it was ordered at ten. His lordship, the bishop, was sent for by express, and is expected every minute. Father Ossory has been here above an hour, ma'am.'

'Before you say another word, Mary, you must tell me how my dear mother is.'

'My lady is up, Miss Helen; Bridget carried her some jelly-soup the moment there was a fire to warm it—I think at about half-past seven, and my lady says it has quite restored her.'

‘Thank God!’ said I.

‘It is a wonder that yourself, Miss Helen, should be able to be up.’

Mary continued to talk of many other things, not forgetting the black-bird, whose visit, she said, she was quite sure, from the first, boded no good to the house.

When she had retired, I sat down to reflect for a few moments, and take a glance at the last twenty-four hours. Oh, how much had they comprised! I seemed to have lived years in that short space! ‘Yesterday, at this hour,’ said I, ‘I knew nothing of my dear father’s pecuniary distresses, or of the consequences, so deplorable to myself. And now—*that* sorrow has been obliterated, or at least suspended, by occurrences the most unexpected that could have been imagined—and this is human life! Only to-day is ours! To-morrow may never come—or coming, may so efface all that has gone before it, as to create to us the beginning of a new era.’

Before leaving my room, I knelt—not to the crucifix, nor to the holy mother—but unto Him, the Lord of Lords, the Alpha and Omega of the universe!

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As I rose from my knees, my two sisters tapped at my door, and entered, laughing, crying, deploring, rejoicing, alternately, and embracing me over and over again.

We descended to the breakfast-room together, and

here a new scene of congratulation and tears awaited me. My mother, father, uncle, confessor, all were there, with hearts so full, that a sumptuous breakfast stood long untasted.

Oh joy! hast thou no tongue in which to speak thy own ecstatic thought, that thou must still from *sorrow* steal her tears? Tears should be sacred to our tenderness, our griefs, our penitence,—not lent to glitter on the cheek of hope, or pleasure, or of a joy unutterable! Yet excess of feeling, whether of pain or pleasure, has but one tongue, one universal sign, whatever character the tumult of the soul may bear.

When breakfast was over, my sisters and I prevailed on my father to take a turn on the lawn. Although he could bestow but a few minutes on us, he answered our numerous questions, and informed us that a meeting of most of the neighbouring magistrates would take place in the castle at two o'clock, to consult on the measures to be taken for getting hold of the incendiaries. He had already, himself, forwarded two scouts to Dublin, where the 'demon,' Margaret Brian, had recently resided, and where it was supposed two grown-up daughters of hers might still be living. 'But,' said my father, 'that woman is so well acquainted with the hide-and-seek-game of this part of Ireland, that I fear there is no hope of coming up with her at present. Meantime, her poor old mother furnished me this morning,



shortly before she breathed her last, with information of a very decisive nature, which leaves not a single doubt of her daughter's having been the perpetrator both of the theft of the jewels, and of the plot to burn the castle. But she had an accomplice in the parish priest, and how deplorable soever this fact may be, there seems, from the testimony of the old woman, to be no doubt of it. It is unfortunate that this evidence was given to myself alone, the perturbation of the moment, and the rapid sinking of the dying woman, not allowing time to call in any witness. My leaving home, too, at this time, is most disastrous to all our plans.'

'Is it impossible to defer your departure indefinitely, my dear father?' I inquired.

'Ah, my child, that is a sore question—and from you, too, whom I am to leave behind!'

At this instant, the bishop and Father Ossory appeared on the lawn, and my father immediately joined them.

As my sisters and I pursued our walk through the park and shrubberies, I thought nature herself had changed, as all other things around us had done. In her development and hues she was indeed, at this season, changing every day; and every day becoming more and more enchanting, but without the power of awakening admiration in minds so disturbed as ours; and her groups of primroses and violets, just bursting their buds, or expanding into bloom, were gazed at

without interest, and plucked but to be instantly thrown away. The exciting and terrific incidents of the night, had doubtless their share in this alienation ; for they had opened up mines of thought to us, as peculiar as new, in which imagination revelled, while creating wonders of its own, and peopling both past and future with visions that eclipsed or transformed every reality around us.

Yet in the midst of this bewilderment, we could not forget that one event of certainty, at least, awaited us, in a separation that might be eternal.

My sisters had so much less to suffer from this than I had, that there was no wonder in their being less dejected. For myself, I was but too well apprised that I was about to be placed entirely under the authority of my uncle. I had been so little in communication with him, that I hardly knew what I might expect from him, except that he was peremptory, and a zealous servant of his church. I should no longer have the gentle and tolerant Father Ossory to pour out my heart to ; but an uncle whose natural and delegated authority must give him the power of exercising over me an unlimited control.

‘ Had he been informed that I had, in my heart at least, rebelled against and renounced that which he revered ?’

This was a momentous question, for on it might hang much of the future peace of my life. I was not too prescient at this time ; but the glimpses

I had of the future caused me to shrink from it. I was henceforth to owe everything to my uncle. I was to be his adopted child, and, doubtless, to be every way at his disposal. Ought I not then to know what might be his requirements, and to disclose something of myself to him? to tell him what I thought, what I hoped, and what I feared, in religious matters?

I spoke to my father on this subject. He advised me to leave everything of that nature to my uncle's generosity, as the only chance of averting coercion, or of retaining the indulgence which had been granted me by Father Ossory, of possessing a Protestant Bible.

'Be moderate,' said my father; 'you are too young to be permitted to take a decided stand on a subject so vast as that which is involved in the polemics of the question betwixt the two churches; and you may seek truth and serve God in a quiet way, without offence to your uncle, by not agitating the subject in dispute, and not opposing the outward forms of his faith, which, as an ecclesiastic and a diocesan, he is doubly bound to maintain.'

The truth of this statement, as regarded the course which must be indispensable to my uncle, both in his official and religious capacity, rendered it appalling. The only words of comfort it contained to me, were those which told me I might 'seek truth

and serve God' in a quiet way, upon conditions which were certainly in my own power.

I had no wish to make a display of my dissent from the church in which I had been brought up; but whether I might not be required, as a matter of duty to God, to defend that dissent, was another question, of as much importance to me, perhaps, as that betwixt the two faiths. I suggested the possibility of my being placed in such a position of trial to my father; for although a Catholic by profession, I considered him altogether as a neutral person, without prepossession in favour of either the one church or the other, and therefore a fair arbitrator in the matter.

His reply to me, though not serious enough to be satisfactory, I record in his own words:

'Helen, my love, Pope tells us that the very essence of religion is in the '*life*' we lead. I speak to no one of my *own* opinions. I do not think them of much importance; but *actions*—yes, in them is the character of the human being. Not, of course, but there may be a right and a wrong way of thinking. I am no model, in that respect, for any one. What I wish for you, my love, is enough of right in theory to steer clear of wrong in action. If you can attain to that, and you have certainly the right book to teach it, it is sufficient. Promise me, then, that you will not enter into any religious dis-

putes with your uncle, and that you will not object to comply with those outward observances of his church which he may possibly require of you.'

'I will at least,' said I, '*endeavour* to do what you require of me, my dear father.'

This concession to what appeared to me duty to my father, no doubt saved me from many a discordant and unavailing discussion with my uncle, which, without such a rein on my 'zeal without knowledge,' I might unwittingly have been led into.

## CHAPTER IX.

I know to-morrow morn will bring that parting woe,  
In spite of all these words, and feelings wild.

MRS. GRAY.

SEVERED as I was about to be from my dear family, under peculiar circumstances, I could not but entertain inexpressible anxiety for their future safety. Our house had, indeed, for the present, escaped the destruction so surely meditated and so nearly executed by a menial who might have been supposed without power to accomplish such a purpose.

Yet, seeing what she had dared to attempt, there could be no security against the repetition of the atrocity in some new form, so long as she was at large. For although her vengeance was professedly aimed only at my father, on account, as it was said, of his having repulsed, with great indignation, claims which when young she had made on his notice beyond those of a mere foster-sister, yet her resentment included in it every member of his family.

As I contemplated these things, I found the strongest reasons for acquiescing in the departure of

my family from Ireland, even as a measure of mere self-preservation, in case of my father's not succeeding in placing his persecutor in the hands of justice. Yet resignation was far from my heart, and I still asked myself with tears, why I might not accompany them? But this inquiry had already been answered by the terms of the obligation incurred to my uncle.

‘And why should I lament, though at so great a cost to myself, that I am thus made useful to so dear a parent? No!’ I exclaimed, ‘I will have no more regrets. The sacrifice of self is not only a duty but a triumph, when we make it for those we love.’

I became more tranquil, and when the family circle met again, and I learnt that arrangements were already made for my departure with my uncle on the following morning, I received the announcement without losing my self-possession. I shall be forgiven for yielding, on my return to my own room, to a flood of tears, which left me no more to shed; for in leaving the home of my infancy, under circumstances so hopeless as those which caused my banishment, I felt that I should be for ever sundered from it, and be thus rent at once both from the illusions and the realities that had hitherto charmed my existence.

Father Ossory was under the necessity of leaving us on this day before dinner, and as I wished to have an interview with him before my departure, I requested an audience of him in the oratory, early in the day.

When I had requested his permission, in a former interview, to be allowed to use the Protestant Bible, he had peremptorily refused me. A few days after, he acceded to my request, by sending me a copy both of that and of the Catholic Bible; so that I had an opportunity of comparing the two, my sister Dora assisting me in doing so. The discrepancies in the two translations were numerous, and in some instances important, inasmuch as they involved points of doctrine, as well as of practice. We found the Catholic Bible full of copious notes in the margin, the general tenour of which was in striking opposition, not to say contradiction, to the obvious meaning of the sacred text.

It appeared quite clear to us, that the Catholic commentators considered the sacred writings a subordinate authority to that of the church; and, how impious soever this may seem, it is but in harmony with the arrogance assumed by the head of the Romish church; who, 'exalting himself above all that is called God, and sitting in the temple of God, showing that he is God,' assumes a pre-eminence over the Almighty himself.

'That is, indeed,' exclaimed Dora, 'making the pope what the authorities of the church have pronounced him to be, *'our Lord God the Pope, equal to God, and more than God.'*\* Yet it is too absurd, as

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\* Note 4.



well as too impious an assumption, to win the credence of any rational being.'

I wished to pose my sister a little, and therefore said, 'You forget, Dora, how ancient is this assumption, and how numerous are its supporters.'

'Ah, Nelly, it must be as Lavater says, that '*indolence* is the prevailing sin of human nature.' It is no doubt to avoid the labour of inquiry that we content ourselves with whatever persons in authority may choose to impose on us. The gross arrogance of the pope can be but little known to the generality of those who call themselves his children. Roman-catholic writers are accustomed to wrap up their extreme doctrines, in a general way, in equivocal assertions, which are evaded, or explained away, or persisted in and enforced, as occasion may require, or the policy of Jesuitism dictate.'

'You think, then, Dora, that it is indolence, or rather the ignorance that results from it, which sustains our church? You forget that the Jesuits, at least, are not indolent. They are an active, an intelligent, and a learned body of men, forming a large class in our church. How do you account for the adhesion of so enlightened a body as they to the absurdities which you find so revolting?'

'They, perhaps, adhere to them,' replied Dora, 'from love of mysticism, power, or distinction; no light distinction, certainly, to the ambitious man, to find himself exalted by his connexion with the church into a sort

of *divinity*; for no doubt every Jesuit believes himself to be a partaker with the pope of that deification which asserts itself to be '*more than God.*' Besides, Nelly, though you speak of the Jesuits as a learned, active, and intelligent body of men, you seem to forget that amongst masses, there are never more than a few who are distinguished by intelligence and acquirement, and those few supply brain, as it is wanted, to the remainder. There are amongst the Jesuits a vast number of subordinates, who have neither intellect nor learning, but who, by severe discipline, have been moulded into an obedience to their superiors, so uncompromising, that whatever they are commanded to do, they do without hesitation, although it should be an act of self-immolation, or the immolation of another. They are allowed, in the service of their superiors, to violate every article of the Decalogue with impunity. They may commit theft, slander, or murder, provided they can do it so adroitly as not to betray their employers; and crime becomes even meritorious, if by its commission it obtain for the Company some worldly advantage. Surely it can be no credit to any church to have the adhesion of such a body of men?"\*

'But it is said they do good, Dora?'

'Oh yes! they do good, and they love good,—they love it so well that they do evil to obtain it;

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\* Note 5.

never losing sight of that convenient doctrine of expediency, which makes the end justify the means !'

Caroline, who during the preceding conversation had been sitting at a window, occupied in embroidery, now turned round to us, and said,—

'I want to know, Dora, why you have been reading the Bible, and such a variety of works by Protestant writers, perhaps idly and without object at first, but by which you say you have been so much enlightened as to discover error, and very atrocious error, where all should have seemed truth to you, and which did seem truth until you began to eat of this forbidden fruit?'

'The forbidden fruit,' replied Dora, 'on which I have been feeding, bears no resemblance to that in the Garden of Eden. That was forbidden by God. What you call by its name is forbidden only by men ; and by men, as far as I can learn, interested in forbidding it ; namely, cardinals and priests, and such persons, whose interest it is to keep people in ignorance, because a knowledge of the sacred writings would destroy the craft by which they enable themselves to obtain and retain an eminence and an authority over their fellow-men which secure to them the high places of the earth, and every other luxury that taste or ambition may desire.'

'Ah, Dora ! I am afraid nothing that I can say will prove a remedy for the evil I cannot but deplore, of your departure from the true faith.'

‘I am sorry, dear Carry, to say anything that gives you pain, but you have put me on my defence. I am not sufficient mistress of this subject to originate my own thoughts on it; I do but express myself agreeably to the tenour of those writers whose works I have read, and whose earnestness has in itself such an air of truth, that I find it impossible to close my eyes against their reasonings and elucidations. And yet, frivolous being as I fear I am, I often find it so disagreeable to halt between two opinions, that I long to return to equanimity on almost any terms. Understand, dear Carry, that I am still externally a Catholic, although I hardly dare own this to myself, when I remember the abhorrence of the Almighty of false gods and graven images.’\*

‘But Dora,’ said Caroline, reproachfully, ‘we do not worship the image; it is the saint, or the holy person which it is formed to represent, that we adore.’

‘You defend such worship in the usual way, Carry; but when we consider that the worship of saints, and even of angels, is forbidden of God, your apology for the mere image is of no value.’

‘I cannot reply to that, Dora, for I am not acquainted with the Scriptures, and I have a horror of being unsettled in my mind on so important a subject as that of religion; therefore I will not attempt to dispute on it.’

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\* Note 6.

‘I can well understand your feelings, Caroline ; but truth is so important that it is worthy of our most zealous research ; and once awake to this conviction, we cannot go to sleep again at will. *That* religion which is endangered by conscientious inquiry, must be an illusion. Yet we are such creatures of habit, that even when knowing we are in the wrong, we adhere to it, because we are familiar with it, and we like not the labour of attaining to the right. Now, there is our dear father, who has been for years in this predicament ; he is neither Catholic nor Protestant, because he is too sensible and too sincere to be the first, and too irresolute to be the last. From this cause, our religious education has been neglected to such a degree, that except the curtseyings, and crossings, and bendings, and babblings of words called prayers, but which issue only from the lips, we have been left almost entirely unacquainted even with the religion of our own church, such as it is, by those whose duty it should have been to instruct us in it. The consequence is, that we have surreptitiously, as it were, obtained information that has forced us so rapidly on conclusions adverse to our own religion, that we find ourselves from habit rendering an external homage to what we hold in contempt. How all this has happened, I hardly know, for it is scarcely eighteen months since we were all entirely thoughtless of everything in faith or worship, except those outward forms and ceremonies which we

were wont to perform mechanically, as puppets in a showman's box, that enact their parts by means of strings and pullies. Yet we called this religion, and wrapt ourselves up in the *infallibility* of our church. It was our dear little Nelly, here, that first opened her eyes to this 'practical misnomer,' as she called it, and set poor papa laughing at her discovery.'

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I had found it necessary to take a retrospect of the foregoing conversation, which had taken place some weeks before; as it was indispensable that I should submit my own views of the Catholic Bible to the good father.

When I had done so, he seemed more than usually depressed, and there was a mildness and deep seriousness in his tone and manner, that rendered everything he said impressive. He appeared to me like a person under some mental difficulty. He made assertions, then explained them, and again revised them, as if painfully anxious to be in the right.

Venerable old man! had a gleam of light shone on his mind, exhibiting the possibility of his not having yet attained to a knowledge of divine truth? Or did he regret that he had put into my hands that which had led me still further from the Catholic faith? Our interview terminated by his recommending me to aim at humility, rather than knowledge; and giving me his blessing, I took leave of him, under a feeling of great depression and self-distrust.

## CHAPTER X.

— The fair form of happiness  
That hovered round, intent to bless—  
Scared by the phantoms of distress,  
Flew back to heaven.

CAMOENS.

AS I quitted the good father, and was slowly crossing the hall, I perceived, through one of the side windows of the entrance door, a carriage and four driving up the great avenue at full speed. So far as the liveries were recognisable in the distance, I fancied them to be those of Sir Lucius MacNeil, and instantly thought, with pain, of the rejection he had recently received from my sister.

I did not quicken my steps, but rather lingered, with a feeling of curiosity to ascertain who might be our new guest. I thought that, having ascertained this, I could in a moment retire from the hall by one of the many side doors, after the carriage had reached the house. But the footmen, who must have seen its approach, and perhaps identified the liveries in the distance, came running in haste to the great door of entrance, and throwing it open, were in a moment at their post, awaiting its arrival.

As the steps of the carriage were let down, a gentleman sprang from it, and bounded into the hall, before I had time to move.

I recognised him, and my first thought was to run away; but it was too late for this expedient, as he was already approaching me. Monsieur de Grammont—for it was indeed he whom I beheld—greeted me without a word in a sort of dumb show, but with all his accustomed grace of manner; while I, utterly incapable of either word or movement, was so distracted betwixt the joy of seeing him, and the pain of rushing recollections, that I forgot every ordinary courtesy; but recovering myself after a few moments, proposed to conduct him to my father.

He bowed assent, and, turning to the servants, who stood in a distant part of the hall awaiting his orders, dismissed them.

We were now alone. My feelings were irrepressible, and I burst into tears.

I became instantly conscious of the betrayal I was making of myself; and my embarrassment increasing, I was once more on the point of running away, but was arrested by perceiving that Monsieur de Grammont was scarcely less agitated and embarrassed than myself.

He was excessively distressed by my tears, which he seemed not to understand, and entreated me to confide to him their cause, which he probably supposed to be the state of our family affairs. Taking



my hand, he pressed it to his lips, and supplicated earnestly for a moment's private interview.

'Let me not alarm you,' said he; 'I will detain you only long enough to ask a single question. I know the sincerity of your nature, and your answer will decide my fate.'

I could not, nor did I attempt to make any reply; and, seeing how incapable I was of doing so, he took silence for consent, and led me across the hall to a small cabinet, the door of which was open. Shutting it on our entrance, he conducted me to a seat. Distracted by conflicting feelings, but thinking I must say something, I expressed an apprehension that, in detaining him so long from my father, I was deferring the welcome which I was sure he would be impatient to express, on his return to the castle.

'Pardon me,' said he, in a sad tone, and changing colour as he spoke, 'I am sorry not to be of your opinion; but if I have *your* welcome, it will supply the lack of every other.'

He did not give me time to inquire of myself what he could mean; but gazing on me for a moment with a look of intense anxiety, said, 'When I think of the hopes I peril, and the visions of happiness which the question I am about to ask may destroy, I am surprised at my own rashness. Nevertheless, suspense comprises so much misery, that I cannot endure it longer.'

All my reserve was giving way at sight of his

suffering countenance, and the frankness of former times was returning, when, without being aware of any object, I said, thoughtlessly, 'Ah, Monsieur de Grammont, is it the custom in your country, when good friends part for a long time, not to utter a word of farewell, or a wish to meet again? Is that what is called taking *French leave*?'

As I asked this question, the palor of his countenance was in a moment exchanged for a crimson hue, and he exclaimed—'Is it possible that I hear aright? Do you indeed deign to reproach me for an agonising omission, despotically forced on me? Was is not, then, *your* rejection which compelled me to it?'

'Rejection!' I repeated, in bewilderment, 'what rejection?'

'The rejection of my hand, my heart, my all—proffered to you through your father, on the very day I left the castle, when I was last here. I implored both Sir William and Lady Mulgrave to allow me to receive that rejection from your own lips; but in vain. They were so inflexibly opposed to my wishes, as to request me (with great politeness certainly) to depart without even seeing you again.'

My astonishment and other feelings overpowered me. Léonce knelt at my feet, and again asked—'Was the rejection, then, not *yours*?'

'No—it was not. I never, until this moment,

dreamed that I had been honoured by any proposal of yours.'

As I said this, all reserve seemed at once to be thrown away, and his expressions of delight became too rapturous to be repeated. I will therefore not attempt to record them, or to describe the sounds which now met my ear. They could vibrate only on hearts awaking, like mine, from a long dream of doubt and desolation. In a few minutes I was fully satisfied that I was loved as far beyond my deserts as my hopes, and more in danger of being idolized than again forsaken. The circumstances under which our mutual confidences were made, left us neither time nor power to deliberate; and before we could think of consequences, we had solemnly exchanged vows which bound us to each other for ever. As we looked back, however, on the attempt that had been so arbitrarily made to separate us, we could not but have misgivings of what might be again attempted. The rejection of Monsieur de Grammont by my father, was an enigma which I could not in any way solve. Acquainted, as I was, with the liberality or indifference of my father in matters of religion, I could not persuade myself that Léonce's being a Protestant (which, as he informed me, was the ostensible cause of his rejection), could have been anything but a pretext; and the studied concealment of his proposals, and the not allowing me to have any voice in the affair, seemed like an un-

justifiable trifling, both with Léonce and myself, which I knew not how *he* would ever be able to forgive. His relation of what he had suffered from this occurrence charmed while it lacerated my heart, and I felt that I could never obliterate the debt I owed him.

A thought crossed me, which I mentioned to Léonce, that some other hand than my father's had been in this; and I trembled as the recollection flashed on me, that I now belonged to an uncle who would probably be far more inflexible in his opposition to the marquis's present suit, than my father had been to his past.

But it was necessary that it should be ascertained at once, to whom the power of disposing of me belonged, that Léonce might no longer be kept in suspense, and that we might both know our future doom.

No one could decide this point but my father—that dear father whom I loved so much, but who from some, at present, imperceptible cause, had, perhaps, devoted both Léonce and myself to endless regrets.

I learned from Léonce that he had been made acquainted with the projects of my father for retrenchment, as well as with the unfortunate circumstances which occasioned them, by my Aunt Mulgrave, and that it was his intention, in the interview he was about to have with my father, to place

his house in Paris at his disposal, during his stay there. His arrival at the castle had been hastened by his having heard on the road of the danger in which we had been so recently placed by incendiaries. He begged me to tell him the particulars of it, and was deeply moved by a hasty narration of them. There was much mystery, he thought, in the cause to which we attributed so fearful an attempt, which seemed inadequate to the malignity of it.

‘As I take a survey,’ said he, ‘of the complications which surround your family, and of your own position when severed from them, I feel sick at heart, and tremble to again lose sight of you.’

I felt as he did on this subject, and spoke to him of that mercy which is over all the works of God, and of the protecting care which never slumbers.

A train of religious thoughts was thus introduced, and we reciprocated ideas and feelings, which led me to inform him of my almost avowed secession from Romanism. He listened with deep attention to a detail of the circumstances and influences which had led to this result, and implored me to be ‘faithful unto death’ to the light received.

‘The alleged impediment to our happiness is now removed,’ he continued, fervently; ‘and the bond of a common faith, which unites us, is as immortal as our souls. You are no longer a Roman Catholic. It was indeed scarcely possible—with your sincerity and understanding—for you to continue one, after

becoming acquainted with the Scriptures. Does Sir William know of this change?"

'Yes, and connives at it; but he will not allow me to avow it, as he fears, if my uncle were acquainted with it, he would shut me up in a convent for life; and as my father is leaving me entirely under his control, he charges me never to provoke his hostility by any revelation respecting it.

'Oh my God!' exclaimed Léonce, devoutly, 'is there no rescue for you from the intrigues and despotism of popery! Helen, my love, my carriage still waits at your door—why not allow yourself to use it, without leave of any one, and to be conveyed in it at once, with your maid as your attendant, to your aunt in London? You will tell me you do not know your aunt. I can assure you she is the most excellent of women, and, as you are aware, a Protestant. She will, I am sure, receive you joyfully. You would thus relieve your father from the danger of opposing his brother, and spare him the misery of sacrificing his child.'

As I deprecated the proposal by gestures,—

'Be not offended,' he said, 'by a seeming extravagance. Be deaf to my wild wishes, if they offend you. But, I implore you, have some care for your own safety. I have no thought of accompanying you to London, except as an escort to your carriage on horseback. I only wish to place you out of the reach of the menacing evils that are gathering round

you, and which my prescience tells me may be fatal to us both. If I could see you safe under your aunt's protection, I would remove to whatever distance you might prescribe, till all impediments to our union were removed.'

I had listened with no reluctant heart to this too romantic project, and might have been prevailed on to consent to it, had it been a *dernier* resort, and had I not recollected that the adoption of me by my uncle, and my residence with him, were conditions on which alone he had been induced to rescue my father from the perils of his position.

When I had explained this to Léonce, he sank into silence, and no longer urged the adoption of his expedient, although, in rejecting it, he said he feared we were rushing into an endless and agonizing suspense, which might end at last in for ever separating us.

I found it so difficult to prevail on Léonce to allow me to leave him, that the lunch-hour, struck by the hall clock, had begun to bring the family together, before our 'moment's interview' had terminated. A deep sadness overspread the countenance of Léonce as I received the parting pressure of his hand, and his million of acknowledgments for what he called my condescension, in listening to him and accepting his vows. As I hastily pronounced my adieus, supposing we should meet again in a few minutes at the lunch-table,—

‘Helen,’ said he, ‘a presentiment of evil presses on me; and I much fear, your uncle being here, as on a former occasion, that your father will again allow himself to be controlled by him in deciding our fate. Independently of your uncle’s *Protestant hatred*, which you are aware he has hardly ever thought it worth while to conceal, I am apprehensive that you are in some way already disposed of by him, and he will perhaps not consult your inclinations, or be moved by any resistance to his will. Think me not disposed to groundless suspicion, dearest Helen. Had you lived in the world as long as I have, and seen the depths of as many popish intrigues as I have, you would participate in my distrust.’

‘Fear nothing,’ said I, thoughtlessly; ‘with faith and patience, we shall conquer all difficulties!’

I was indeed too happy at that moment in Léonce’s tenderness and truth, and so confident of his power to control events, that I could not fear anything so long as he was with me.

I left him, nevertheless, in tears; and having made my escape, flew up stairs to my own apartment, without looking behind me, or encountering a single individual in my path.

My sisters had already gone down, and being alone, I knelt to thank God for the unexpected and inexpressible happiness that had befallen me. As I went to an open window, and gazed on a beautiful



scene, mantled with more than mid-day splendours, both earth and sky seemed to participate in my happiness.

I had observed, as I passed through the hall, that Monsieur de Grammont's carriage was not waiting at the door, and supposed it had been driven away in expectation of his remaining at the castle.

Will he be invited to remain? was a query which instantly threw a dark cloud over me, as I thought on the possibility, which Léonce had suggested, of a second rejection.

'But no,' said I; 'it is impossible that my father could repeat such a mistake. His circumstances and views, too, which are now so different from what they lately were, must enable him to see (independently of the happiness his consent would confer on Léonce and myself) the advantage to us all, of such an addition to our family as that of Monsieur de Grammont.'

He casts me from himself and my whole family, only that through my uncle's bounty or caprice I may be provided for in future life. By accepting Monsieur de Grammont's proposals, who I have no doubt is generous enough not to ask a dowry with me, I should be able to join the dear travelling party, of which Léonce would make one; and our hearts would not be torn to pieces by the cruel separation now contemplated.

My experience of life at this time had not taught me that the greater part of the misery that fills the

world is owing to the wrong-headedness of those who control its affairs.

As I entered the eating-room, my first glance fell on the bishop and Father Ossory, who were in close conversation, apart from my mother and sisters. Until this moment the oddity of Monsieur de Grammont's carriage having remained at the door so long before he was announced, had not occurred to me. Now, it flashed on me all at once, and caused me, as my sisters advanced to meet me, with arch, reproachful, and yet congratulatory looks, to feel as though I had been guilty of an unpardonable omission in not apprising my father at first of his arrival. Dora, dear Dora, whose thoughts were ever on her lips, began at once to catechise me respecting Monsieur de Grammont's whereabouts during the full hour, as she said, although I thought it only half that time, that he was missing after his arrival.

I related to her, without reserve, all the circumstances of my unexpected meeting with him, and his earnest entreaty that I would allow him a momentary private interview, before he presented himself to my father.

'My dear Nelly,' said she, 'his sudden disappearance, and eventually yours, for you were not missed at first, have been the cause of a general search through the house and grounds; and my uncle'—lowering her voice—'was so sure of your having been run away with, in some fairy vehicle waiting out of

sight for you, while the marquis's chariot was left at the door, 'as a tub for the whale,' that even now, for aught I know, horsemen may be out in every direction, with orders to find and force you back, at every hazard, regardless of any resistance made by your daring kidnapper.'

What could I reply to all this, but express my regret that what was intended but for a 'moment's interview' should have given rise to any pursuit on my account; while I consoled myself with thinking Dora's jest to be without much ground.

Nevertheless, I replied that the light in which she had placed the thing seemed to make it necessary that I should offer some apology or explanation to papa; but on hearing that Monsieur de Grammont and he were together, I had no doubt Léonce had already explained everything to him.

My uncle now approached the table, with Father Ossory, and without noticing me, except by a very grave bend of the head, seated himself at the table.

My mother was already there, and we circled round her. There was very little eating, and less speaking; while all eyes seemed fixed on me with an inquiring expression, very painful to me.

My father had ordered refreshments for himself and Monsieur de Grammont in his study, so that all hope of seeing them at the table was at an end.

I became so frightened amidst the silence around me, that it was with difficulty I withheld myself

from being the first to leave the table. Soon, however, my uncle rose; and walking surlily out of the room, Father Ossory followed him, and we saw no more of them.

Dora and I made our retreat to our own boudoir, and shutting the door, we sat on the sofa, while I leant on her shoulder and told her all that had passed betwixt Léonce and myself.

Her sincere and tender, though playful sympathy, taught me, more than ever, the value of sisterly love and confidence, and enabled me to await, with tolerable composure, the result of the conference below.

Dora soon left me, to learn, if possible, with what success the suit was proceeding in my father's study. She returned in a few minutes, looking fearfully pale, saying she had been bold enough to knock at the study-door, which had been only half opened to her by my father, with a countenance excessively agitated. He waved her off with his hand, without a word; but she had heard the bishop's voice in notes of thunder, and was glad to get out of the hearing of it.

It was impossible not to foresee what the result must be, unless my father should assert an independent opinion, and prove able to emancipate himself from the control of his brother—that brother who owned no allegiance to any principle or power but that of the church, and who considered the

sacrifice even of natural affection—if he had any—as a meritorious offering to it.

On learning how matters stood, I cast away all my hopes; and throwing myself on the sofa, that I might hide my face in its pillows, bitterly reproached myself for the folly of the security which I had cherished but an hour since.

‘Léonce is right. Yes; we are now for ever separated!’ I exclaimed.

Dora did not answer me, but went to the window, which commanded a view of the high road, as it ran over a rising ground in the distance. A telescope on a stand, with which we were accustomed to amuse ourselves, stood before the window. Dora seated herself at this post of observation, while I lay in deep agony, on the sofa. Very soon I heard her crying.

‘Is it, then, all over?’ I asked.

‘I fear it is,’ she said. ‘I see his chariot driving furiously over the hill, with the grooms after it in full gallop.’

She left the window, and, kneeling before the sofa, embraced me tenderly. Her tears continued to fall, but I could not obtain a similar relief. She felt my pulse.

‘I am not fainting,’ said I.

‘No,’ said she, ‘but you are very cold. Shall I ring for some wraps?’

‘No, no; do not bring people to look at me.’

'I will go myself for a warm cloak,' said she; and shutting the door after her, she was out of hearing in an instant.

The next minute there was a gentle tap at the door, and my father entered. As he saw me stretched on the sofa, he approached it softly, saying, 'Is it you, my love, Helen?'

Finding my throat swelling almost to suffocation at his approach, I was unable to reply. He took one of my hands, and finding it very cold, seemed to think I was insensible; but I immediately showed signs of consciousness, and he bent over me to examine my countenance.

'Is it come to this,' said he, 'that my own darling Helen averts her face from me? Helen, speak to me—reproach me, if you will; but do not look like death!'

'I am only cold,' said I. 'I will sit up.'

'No, no,' said he; 'lie still.'

Dora returned with a down coverlet, and enveloped me in it. We sat perfectly mute for a minute or two, when Dora rose, and left the room.

My father, without losing another moment, said, 'Do not let me hurry you, my love, although my time is short; but tell me what I may speak of. I have always considered you as my little heroine, with courage enough for any emergency. Shall I try it too much if I tell you that De Grammont has just left the castle, and with me a message for you,

which I have no option but to deliver, having promised him that I would do so?’

I felt my heart beginning to beat violently, but commanding myself, said—

‘I know he is gone, papa; but he should have taken leave of me.’

‘It was not his fault, poor fellow, that he did not. He is really a very fine fellow, and my good opinion of him ought to gratify you.’

A thousand hopes sprang up in my heart at these words, which brought tears that relieved me. ‘Ah, papa! it is but natural to you to do justice; yet Monsieur de Grammont must have been treated harshly, to cause him to leave your house so abruptly.’

‘Helen, my love, I see there is no occasion for any further hesitation. Your good sense and heroism are returning. As de Grammont has been perfectly frank in explaining the object of the interview which he tells me he *forced* on you this morning, I may speak on the subject, I hope, without paining you too much. As you are aware of his pretensions, then, I need not mention them; but I trust that in declining them, at the instance of your uncle—to whom we must not forget that you now belong, I may not have painfully opposed your own inclinations?’

‘Have I, then, no *father*?’ I asked, in an agony of grief.

He turned his head away, and waving his hand to

deprecate interruption, continued :—‘I could not extort from De Grammont any remark indicating acquaintance with your feelings. I was glad to find that you must have left him ignorant of them, whatever they are. It is but a natural and essential defence of woman, that she wrap herself up in impenetrable reserve until the marriage-knot is tied. Yet, I hardly expected to find you, who are naturally frank and sincere, and fresh to this sort of sentiment, so strictly prudent, and steeled against the solicitations of so eloquent and impassioned a pleader as I am sure De Grammont must be.’

‘Oh ! my dear father, do not torture me with praise which I do not deserve. I am totally destitute of the prudence and mental reserve you ascribe to me. I have given my whole heart to Léonce, who had already given me his, and we have exchanged irrevocable vows, which, if there is truth or honour in human nature, can never be broken !’

It was now my father’s turn to be moved. He threw himself back in his chair with a deep sigh, covering his eyes with his hand, as if stunned by surprise, or overpowered by a rush of painful feelings. While I sat half up on the sofa, gazing on him with the most anxious concern for the effect of my precipitate acknowledgment, he suddenly rose, and left the room. I hoped that he had only gone away for a moment, but he did not return for half an hour.



Meantime, thoughts and regrets, and hopes and fears, were chasing each other through my troubled mind; but always ending in the dear recollection, that however sundered for the moment, Léonce and I were one! This was an unalterable fact, although we might live to old age before we met again. But the message charged to be delivered by my father—what could *that* be?

When he returned, he looked very grave and thoughtful. Taking a seat by my side, he said, 'Much as your communication pained me, Helen, I am glad I know all, as I am enabled thereby to offer you more useful advice.

'I must, however, discharge myself of my commission before I enter on anything else. Do not allow it to agitate you, or even render you secure, of what is always uncertain, the constancy of an absent lover.'

I covered my face, for my father looked anxiously at me, with a sadness that expressed compassion, and thus awakened fears that hope had lulled to sleep.

'As I walked with the marquis to his carriage,' said he, 'after the storm betwixt him and your uncle had, as it were, swept him out of the house, he entreated me, as he could not obtain a parting word with you, to be the bearer of a message from him. Struck with surprise at such a request, although the *mitred* affront, which he had just received in my house, made it seem necessary that I should make

some *amende*—I hesitated. But recollecting that this civility, although a sort of trespass on prudence, was the only expression of respect now in my power, for the generous and noble sentiments he had professed for my darling child, I consented to his request. I fear, my dear, that your father is yet too inexperienced in the management of his children's love affairs to perform a part in them as coldly as he ought. But I will have no reserves with you, and I am sure I may then entrust you to the guidance of your own mind. The message was this—‘Say to *your* and *my* Helen, that the sentiments I have this day professed for her will be as lasting as my life!’ Does this satisfy you, Helen? I feel it my duty, in repeating this enthusiastic assurance, which is, I have no doubt, sincere at present, to apprise you, if it has not already occurred to you, that such vows are often cancelled by time and distance. In one word, they are forgotten.’

‘Never, by a man of honour, like De Grammont, papa!’

‘I almost envy you such faith in another, my love. But you will too soon acquire a knowledge of human fallibility in such matters. Meanwhile, we must prepare ourselves for intervening trials and duties. You are aware that at this moment I owe so much to my brother, that I should be a criminal of the deepest dye, if I could sin against him by violating the conditions on which he from the first consented to save

myself and family. One of the principal of these was, that I should bestow *you* on him, and entrust you wholly to his guidance. He saw *that* in your character which pleased him, which inspired him with parental attachment, and which would, he thought, enable him to place you in life advantageously to yourself and family.'

This remark grated very much on my feelings, but my father continued.

'Having thus given you to your uncle, he has accepted the gift, engaging to perform to you the part of a father. Therefore, never again ask me whether you have a father; it breaks my heart. And above all things, never allow yourself to distrust your uncle. He will not fail you, unless you very seriously oppose his will. As regards Monsieur de Grammont, you must give him up, now and for ever. You must not even think of him. For be assured your uncle will never consent to your marrying him, being, as he is, a determined Protestant.'

'But, papa, as I am also a Protestant, in opinion and in feeling, would not that go far towards cancelling my uncle's objections to the marquis's suit?'

'Oh, my child!' exclaimed my father, 'what a simple creature you are. Have I not repeatedly told you that it would be utter ruin, both to yourself and me, for the bishop to know that you were in any degree swerving from the Romish church? You have yet much to learn of that allowable subtlety, essential to the successful management of secular affairs.'

‘But would not sincerity in all cases better serve our interests than concealment and insincerity? Even in our own affairs at this moment, would it not be better that my uncle should be fully informed of everything, although the so doing might require an entire revision of your arrangements with him?’

‘I find it very difficult, Helen, to talk to you on this subject. You, who know only the right, and nothing of the wrong which is perpetually conflicting with it in the affairs of life, are utterly unaware of the difficulty of holding the balance between them. I said I would have no reserves with you, and I will not, although I would willingly have spared you the pain of knowing the full extent of your uncle’s bitterness towards de Grammont. After expressing to him the most violent opinions upon religious matters, the bishop asserted, in his ordinary strong language, the absolute authority of the church, and her right to punish even with death in all cases, if she so willed it, apostates from her faith. ‘It has,’ said he, ‘only been an oversight, or an omission of duty from some other cause on the part of the spiritual executives of the church, that your own life, Monsieur de Grammont, so long forfeited, has hitherto been spared.\* Nevertheless, to terminate this discussion, if you will *now* renounce your errors, and return to the faith

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\* Note 7.

of your forefathers, I will not oppose your union with my niece.'

‘‘My lord,’ said de Grammont, ‘in what you have just uttered, I presume that you have given me your ultimatum. I have to thank you for the seeming sincerity, though not for the mockery, of your decision, and I will endeavour to reply to you with equal frankness. You propose to me to return to the Romish church, and as a motive to it, you offer me the greatest boon that earth could bestow on me.

‘‘But it is necessary you should know, that never having been in that church, I cannot be considered as an apostate from it. My life is not, therefore, forfeited to it, even upon its own intolerant and sanguinary principles.

‘‘My parents had become Protestants before I was born; I was baptized in the Protestant church, and, moreover, ever since reason has rendered me capable of judging betwixt the two churches, I have, both from conviction and choice, remained a Protestant. Were I so base as to renounce Protestantism, believing, as I do, that it is founded upon God’s Holy Word, which I hold to be the only test of right and wrong in matters of faith or practice, I should be utterly unworthy of so sincere and upright a being as your niece, nor should I dare to offer my hand for her acceptance, while my heart was polluted by falsehood to God.’’

I had listened with breathless interest to my father’s

brief narrative, and in the admiration I felt for Monsieur de Grammont's brave and manly defence of his faith, almost forgot that I was a party concerned.

Another moment, and tears of pride and joy were pouring down my face, at the recollection that a heart so noble as his, had been proffered to me—that it was, indeed, mine.

'I understand your feelings, Helen,' said my father, 'but I must not foster them by sympathy. My painful task is not yet over. Your uncle scarcely heard the last words of the marquis, when he exclaimed, 'Now we understand each other, Monsieur de Grammont; and from this moment, if you attempt to renew an intercourse of any kind with my niece, by letter or by any other means except through myself, I will place her out of your reach for ever, by putting her into a convent for life, in a locality where no human power shall ever reach her.'

This climax was frightful, but my terror did not overpower my reason; for I thought I saw in it an extravagance of purpose, almost destructive of itself.

Yet, my father assured me that the church would uphold any ecclesiastic of my uncle's rank in the exercise of such power, if it were deemed advantageous to itself. 'But,' he continued, 'I do not in reality think you have anything to fear from your uncle's ultraism, unless, by the most undutiful resistance to his will, you should provoke him to the exercise of it. I have received his most solemn promises

of tenderness and indulgence towards you, and I am sure he will keep those promises, because I believe he really loves you with an affection almost parental.

‘ And now, my dear Helen, as you know your exact position, you must brace yourself to an heroic submission to what has occurred. As it regards the part which I have myself performed in this drama, it is as useless as it is painful for me to perceive that, if I could have looked into the hearts of those around me, I might have acted differently. But you can know nothing of that imbecility of purpose and of effort which pecuniary embarrassment entails on its victims, and which becomes a deplorable despotism when it coerces a man, as in my case, to the abandonment or transfer of the dearest and most sacred duties. As it is, we must make the best of it; and if we look back to only a few hours since, when your mother and we stood in this room on the very brink of destruction, with numerous others in different parts of the house sleeping unconsciously in their beds, and devoted to the same ruin, we shall find in our wonderful escape from it so much cause for gratitude, that we shall not find it difficult to resign our future to Providence. It is my happiness to know that your mind is accessible, not only to the arguments of reason, but to the feelings of devotion. Let these resume their empire, and you will not waste your energies in unavailing regrets, but forget-

ting the past, devote yourself to the duties of the present, whatever they may prove !'

My father took me in his arms, and embracing me fervently, left the room.

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I did not remain long alone after he had departed, but when I no longer heard his voice, I sat for some time drowned in tears, and lost in thought.

While he was with me, I was sustained by his kindness, and the anxious part which he bore in my distresses. The manner in which he had taken leave of me indicated that he felt it but as the prelude of the morrow's parting, which, come what might besides, could not be averted.

I longed for rest, for sleep in which I might not dream. I had a confused perception of everything around me. It was as if in one single day the world—*my* world—had been driven out of its orbit, and the balance of everything in life destroyed.

Happily, Dora soon came to seek me, and bear me away with her to another room. The rest of the family were occupied with their own peculiar cares, and we were left to spend the evening together without interruption. We did not attempt to retrace the events of the day. They were cast out of sight as too painful for retrospection. Yet Dora, with her usual playfulness, reminded me that although Pandora's box had been emptied on our hearth, we had not found it bereft of its fabled antidote. 'For



surely,' said she, 'if aught in the accidents of life could form a pre-eminent ground of hope for your future happiness, it is to be found in the character and sentiments of Monsieur de Grammont, as they have been decidedly exhibited in the course of this stormy day.'

We did not separate until a late hour; and then again lingered over our last good night.

When Mary had performed her part, and had left me, a gentle tap, and an opening of my chamber door, announced my mother. 'My dear Helen,' she said, coming to my bedside, 'I could not rest without giving you my sympathy and my blessing, and telling you how deeply I feel the pain of the part assigned you. But we must all obey, when resistance would be criminal, as well as useless; although we may be allowed to hope for future good.'

'Ah! dear mother,' said I, 'speak not of my untoward destiny!' for I saw that, from her peculiar religious views, she could not cordially enter into my feelings, although her natural tenderness induced her to attempt to alleviate them. I thanked her with tears, and lay down with a mother's kiss on my cheek. She bade me good night, and crossing herself, commended me to the care of the 'blessed Virgin.'

## CHAPTER XI.

We have need  
Of high and holy thoughts, wherewith to fence  
Our hearts against despair !

HEMANS.

I PASSED the hours of darkness almost without sleep, in that harrowing thought which disowns tears. Yet the day dawned, and the soft light stole over hill and dale, with as sweet a progress and as joyous an effect as if nothing had happened to me. This was succeeded by the glories of a May morning.

The birds sang among the branches of the yet half-clothed trees, the flowers sent forth their fragrance, the deer bounded joyously over the lawn, and the cattle grazed upon the newly-sprung herbage with their usual quietness of mien. Inanimate nature participates not in human suffering, yet the eloquence of her silence stills the tumults of the soul, and the very unconsciouness of her aspect hushes it into repose. I opened my wiindow, to catch the morning breeze, and contemplate the rich landscape before me, just as the sun made its appearance above the horizon. The tranquillity of the scene, and that indescribable

influence which the early morning has upon the senses and the heart, operated as a moral anodyne upon my whole being. As I knelt at the open window, gazing on the visible heavens, which seemed but as a curtain that veiled from human sight the radiance of the celestial world, I devoted myself in deep submission to the will of God, praying that Léonce also might be able to do the same.

When I descended to breakfast, I found all the family assembled. My uncle was amongst them, but I found great difficulty in greeting him with even ordinary courtesy.

We had each of us been apprised by what we had suffered in anticipation of it, of the necessity of self-control, at the last moment. Nevertheless, of what after all could I tell, but of heart-breaking and convulsive weeping; of looks and tones that must live for ever in memory's deepest cells; of death-like dread of never meeting more; of withering thoughts of the past and fears for the future.

I was almost insensible as I threw myself back in my uncle's carriage, though still conscious of the swiftness with which I was borne away.

As my uncle sat by my side, I dared not give utterance to my feelings, and therefore forebore to look back through the long avenue of elms, at the grey towers of my home, lest my self-control should forsake me.

My uncle seemed to feel that the parting from my

family must have been very distressing to me. He therefore did not attempt to interrupt the current of my thoughts by conversation; but was attentive and kind in his manner, and seemed well pleased with my apparent tranquillity. I had, indeed, sunk into a torpor of feeling, from which I did not attempt to rouse myself, until we reached the end of our journey.

I then found that Rover, my father's large and beautiful black dog, had accompanied us all the way, in spite of every attempt to drive him back. My favourite pony was also there, which my father had sent with me, and a groom to take care of him; so that I was not without some mementos of home. My uncle had also been prevailed on by my father to allow Mary, though a Protestant, to remain in my service, which was perhaps as great a comfort as I could have had, under the circumstances.

My uncle gave me a cordial welcome as he handed me into his house, a very ancient and imposing mansion, in the neighbourhood of Cork.

The residence appropriated to my use was a detached building, inferior in size to my uncle's, but of the same antique and peculiar character. Both appeared to have been built in troublous times. Perhaps by some religious community, for their protection against attacks. The exterior of the larger building was imposing in its appearance, not only from its size, but from the massy defences that were still

in existence on its walls, though fast losing the distinctness of their outline by the crumbling of their edges.

The two residences were rendered easily accessible to each other, though quite distinct, by a long covered winding passage, obscurely lighted from above by glass of various colours inserted in three singularly constructed domes.

Its walls were painted in light and shade, with so peculiar an effect, as to produce an almost startling illusion, at first sight, of passages diverging from it in long perspective; while deep recesses here and there, filled with sepulchral statuary, inspired feelings of awe that induced a novice in its mysteries to hurry rapidly through it.

The first time I made this attempt, I was suddenly arrested by perceiving that every step I took was responded to by a quiet, smothered vibration, that communicated itself through its whole length; thus giving notice, as I afterwards learnt, to the porter at its invisible extremity that its precincts had been invaded. The exterior of this passage was completely concealed from without by its being covered with the most luxurious ivy, that extended itself over the roofs and domes, so as effectually to prevent any recognition of its walls.

I had imagined, until my arrival, that I was to reside in my uncle's house, not being aware that an ecclesiastic is not allowed to have female inmates. I

now found that a regular establishment had been formed, and a suite of servants engaged for my use alone, at the head of whom was a housekeeper of the name of Mrs. O'Grady. The house was furnished throughout in a most expensive, antique style, suitable to its peculiar architecture, although there was enough of the modern incorporated with it to afford every imaginable comfort to a young and fastidious lady, as my uncle seemed to consider me, who required some indemnity for the want of society, and the heart-breaking separation from her family.

I found the walls of the whole house covered with tapestry, except my own bed-room and an adjoining dressing-room. These were papered, as I afterwards learnt, at the request of my dear father, who, recollecting what must ever be my associations with tapestry in a bed-room, had kindly called my uncle's attention to it. I am almost ashamed to write of the extravagant expense which must have been incurred on my account in fitting up this house.

The furniture and decorations selected for these two rooms alone were so rich and costly as to remind me too painfully of my own insignificance, as well as of my dear father's embarrassments, and fill me with regret.

My uncle spent the first evening of my arrival in conducting me through the house allotted to me, and in pointing out the various conveniences that had been collected for my use; strictly charging me, if

anything had been omitted which I might desire, to order it of Mrs. O'Grady, the housekeeper.

It was not a moment in which I could feel alive to any minor wants, or appreciate justly the considerate kindness that had provided for the gratification of every wish. How worthless appeared to me the elegance of my accommodations, how valueless even my books and musical instruments, since I had no one to share them with me. My faithful Mary became everything to me. With her I could talk of all we had left; of every favourite tree and flower, as well as of those still dearer objects, who like myself must soon be exiled from home.

But this morbid state of mind did not continue. When my family had actually quitted home, and I had heard of their safe arrival in London, I became more tranquil, and recovered a portion of my former content. It was but natural that so dreadful a wrench should cause lacerations which it required time to heal; but in youth and health our sorrows are alleviated by the natural tendency of inexperience to hope. We never believe that we are 'born to trouble' until we have been subdued by it.

Hope, like the sun that gilds all external things with brightness, and gems even the ruin on which it shines, penetrates to the very soul of youth, which is ever disposed to create new, though it may be undefined visions, to replace the cherished fancies that have been rent from its ardent grasp.

The impossibility of my being ever able to attend a Protestant place of worship while residing with my uncle, was soon ascertained.

The nearest church was five miles distant from us ; and although I had a chariot and servants always at my disposal, I could not have used them for such a purpose as that of driving to a Protestant church—bearing as they did the arms and liveries of my uncle,—without committing an outrage on *him* in his public character.

Such an impropriety was only thought of to be at once abandoned ; and I endeavoured to satisfy my heart by an Episcopal service and a sermon of Saurin's, in my own apartment, with Mary, every Sunday.

I had been several weeks at my uncle's house, pursuing this course, without attending mass. My uncle must have had an inkling of it in some way or other ; and I must have been short-sighted not to have foreseen that my shutting myself up for an hour or two with Mary on a Sunday morning, at church hours, must attract the attention of some of the servants of the household. Mary had, indeed, been questioned in the kitchen respecting her whereabouts at such a time ; for although it was understood in the family that she was a Protestant, it seemed to be expected, in the housekeeper's room at least, that she should do as others did, by going to some place of worship. She had evaded the questioning,



for it was not very urgent, and she was, as yet, a new comer.

But on dining with my uncle one day, in his own apartment, the servants having withdrawn, he turned sharply round on me, and said—‘Helen, my dear, I never see you at mass—I hope you do not neglect worship altogether?’

‘No, my dear uncle, I have a service in my own apartment every Sunday.’

‘Oh, you prefer private to public worship, do you? I will have an oratory fitted up for you in the house, and one of my household priests shall do duty for you. Your abigail will, I suppose, have no objection to join you in it? I presume you have not been in the habit of having a service by yourself?’

I saw that my uncle was assuming an air of official dignity and irony in his tone and manner. I therefore replied, gravely—‘No, my lord; Mary has always joined me in a Sunday morning service.’

‘Humph! She is a Protestant, I think?’

‘Yes, my lord.’

‘Well, Helen, I give you your choice, either to attend a morning mass on Sundays at church, or to have a service in the oratory I propose, with the assistance of a priest.’

‘My lord, I think I should prefer attending mass at church, to having a priest to officiate in private.’

'That is your decision, is it, my dear?'

'Yes, my lord, if that will satisfy you.'

'Your abigail must attend you to mass. I tell you that, Helen; or if she is not willing to do so, you must exchange her for one that will.'

I had gone through this short conversation with a beating heart, and I fear a changing complexion; for although not wholly unprepared for such an occurrence, I had never defined to myself exactly what I ought to do in such a case. What I had now done I knew was irrevocable, as my uncle piqued himself upon never swerving from a purpose. Perhaps I had done the best I could do under the circumstances, with the injunction of my father written deeply in my heart, and my abhorrence of idol-worship in no way diminished.

When I again found myself alone, I reflected long upon the fact that I had bound myself to be an habitual witness of imposing and seductive ceremonies, which I had renounced, but which, like an *ignis fatuus*, might lead me away from the narrow path of safety, and inveigle me into dangers from which I might never escape.

Yet from this time I continued to attend mass once a week, attended by Mary, as required, having our Protestant service in the afternoon.

Our going to mass was distressing to both of us, and a source of many tears; but it caused us to keep a perpetual vigil on ourselves, and to have a higher

relish for the heartfelt sincerity and comparative simplicity of our private service. After some time, however, I found a meagreness in this exclusive and solitary worship, which made me long for the house of God, and for that heart-stirring sympathy which can only be felt there, in communion with other and true worshippers. Devotion, like all sentiments of the heart, is contagious; and it is in conformity with this fact that religion requires its votaries, as one means of keeping alive 'the sacred fire,' not to 'forsake the assembling of themselves together.'

Under the restraints that circumstances thus imposed on me on a paramount subject, which more than any other awakens deep feeling and kindles enthusiasm in the youthful heart, I often felt oppressed with a weight of emotion, which seemed without cure. The inexperienced mind cannot, like the mature and the cultivated, sustain itself in isolation, and live upon its own resources. No—it needs exchange of thought and sympathy, as essential to its health and development. I laboriously sought to supply this want to myself by reading, walking, and constant exertion both of body and mind. But at this time I was only a novice in self-sustenance, and weak in faith; and I continually yearned after an ideal good, which did but fly before me and mock my grasp. The astonishing perverseness which had sundered me from one who was both able and willing to supply to me all that earth could give,

often perplexed my understanding and confounded my sense. But of him I had been forbidden to think any more, and although this interdiction had been pronounced by one whom I revered, and who I well knew had uttered it from the kindest and most compassionate motives, yet as the tie betwixt Léonce and myself had become sacred, and, as I thought, indissoluble, by an acknowledgment of mutual feeling and reciprocated vows, I found that what had been imposed on me as a duty was an impossibility, which was so far from being performed, that I endlessly detected myself in dwelling with fond delight on the assurances I had received of his attachment. My soul was no longer alone in the universe of thought ; I conversed with him, in my waking as well as in my sleeping dreams, and every new acquirement was tested by what I imagined might be his appreciation of it ; and though I might never see him more on earth, I felt that so long as I lived it would be for him, as he for me, and that, at any rate, we should meet again in eternity, where

Adieus and farewells are a sound unknown !

The sudden and material change in the exterior life of our family had given me a foresight of the greater changes that attend on human existence in its onward progress, and it appeared to me a puerile occupation for a being so surely destined as man to the immortality of a future world, to cherish a deli-

berate and incapacitating grief, either for privations or bereavements which are inseparable from the very nature of his existence. But when we begin to reason on the claims of sorrow, we may be certain it is losing its empire over us. Nevertheless, so surely is it a part of our inevitable lot, that no sooner have we meditated an escape from it than we are arrested by some new and trying occurrence, before which our cold reasonings hide themselves, as if ashamed of their impotence.

At this period I began to feel a measure of tranquillity, and was able to derive from solitary pursuits unhopèd-for satisfaction. In addition to this, I had the happiness of hearing occasionally from the dear wanderers, and receiving accounts of their movements and enjoyments in London, which furnished me with new ideas and new subjects of thought. But their stay there was short, and the post thence to Cork so lingering in its progress that some two or three letters did not reach me until after the departure of the writers for the Continent.

My sister Dora had the happiness of meeting in London her rejected lover, Sir Lucius Mac Neil, who, on renewing his suit, was accepted, with my father's approbation. It had been arranged for him to follow the party to Paris, where, from my uncle De Carryfort's house, Dora would probably bestow her hand on him.

How I longed to be with them ! But the desire

was checked by the necessity of the case, and when I could persuade myself that the suffering to which I had been doomed was indispensable to my father's eventual return, I felt no more regret.

The following letter was the last I received from my dear sister Dora, before her departure from England, with which I also received long and precious letters from my father and mother, and my sister Caroline :

' Hanover Square, London,  
June, 1816.

' My own darling Nelly,

' We have been in this wonderful metropolis three weeks, and this is but my third letter to you, and must, for the present, be my last. You, who are probably occupied with the pages of a book in the tranquil retreat of your own apartment, or absorbed in meditation, or oppressed by the quietude around you, may find it difficult to believe in the never-ceasing occupations of a novice seeking initiation into London life.

' But if I have not written to my dear Nelly so often as I have wished ; I have thought of her every hour almost, by night as well as by day, for I have continually dreamt of her. Ah, Nelly ! how little did we think a year ago of what has now happened to us. It sometimes seems to me as though we were performing parts in a charade—so utterly crude and

unsuitable to ourselves is very frequently our new acting. Our own dear home used to be our world, and we knew little of any other; for though newspapers occasionally fell under our eyes, we read them idly, though, for the moment, with great interest. But now vague ideas, which had existed in my mind only as a dream, have become a reality; and I have beheld life—yes, London life—in a full-length picture, with all its accessories legibly defined and rendered intelligible.

‘My own little Nelly, so long my pet, my fondling, why are you not here !

Cruel was the uncle that bore you thus away,  
And cruel is the fate that still constrains your stay.

‘I have not, you perceive, forgotten my old propensity to parody. There is a melting little chant in the above style in vogue here just now, which is sung with great effect by one of the songstresses of the season. I enclose it, but entreat you not to shed too many tears over it.

‘Papa has been unsuccessful in his pursuit of the incendiaries, nor do the police functionaries here give him any hope of success for some time to come. They have put their agents in Ireland on the watch for them, so that if, when they may think themselves forgotten, they should turn up, they may yet be brought to account. The castle is left in the care of Mrs. O’Connell, and the estate in that of the agent,

who has orders, to make the lands and farms more productive, by some new modes of management and of agriculture, which are to be adopted without delay.

‘William, who has been desirous of remaining in England, is to accompany us to the Continent, and finish his education at some university there, as papa will not entrust him with the unrestrained freedom he would unavoidably possess if left here in his absence. It is very much to be deplored that he has so strong a self-will, and is so lawless and ungenial in his feelings. He seems to hate the English, and has great pleasure in being rude to them.

‘I cannot omit to mention the dear name of Léonce, whom I am sure we all love, spite of the present position of things. My uncle and aunt dote on him, and think he must in the end conquer the prejudice of the bishop. He is in London, but, though very intimate in Hanover Square, will not, I fear, be seen here while we remain. Considering all the circumstances of the affair, the senseless and bitter opposition that has been made to your union with him is one of the most perverse freaks that fortune ever played to disturb the ‘course of a true love.’ I contemplate with admiration the beautiful resignation with which you have both submitted to a sentence at once unjust and cruel, rather than disturb the arrangements made for retrieving our dear father’s affairs. In this changing world something may, and, I hope, will, yet happen to restore Léonce and you



to each other; and then, to know that your filial sacrifice has been tributary to the happiness of a beloved parent, will render your own blessed indeed.

‘The marriage of the Princess Charlotte, last month, a week or two before our arrival, is an incessant topic of conversation, and people are kind enough to rejoice at it the more, because it has been a love-match. After all, the Prince Regent does not seem to have been so unkind a father as he has been represented. He appears to have acted in the most considerate and indulgent way for the promotion of his daughter’s happiness. It has been asserted that as soon as he had ascertained that the princess was decidedly attached to Prince Leopold, he brought him into immediate personal intercourse with himself, that he might ascertain without mistake the existence of those superior qualities which were attributed to the prince. The princess is much improved in temper since her marriage, her love for her husband having taught her self-control, and infused a sweetness into her manners quite foreign to her former habits.

‘A few evenings since we made a party to Drury Lane theatre, to see John and Charles Kemble, and Young, in the several parts of Brutus, Marc Antony, and Cassius, in *Julius Cæsar*. As Caroline and I had never before seen a play, we were perfectly absorbed in the events and acting of the piece. Imagine, dear Nelly, those beautiful speeches which

we were so lately accustomed to read, or repeat tamely by heart, from the *English Speaker*, recited in character, with a power and charm conceivable only by those who have heard them enunciated by these masters in elocution. Mrs. Siddons has left the stage; but I have heard anecdotes of her power over her audience almost beyond belief. The Princess Charlotte has never seen her acting, and it is said that she will probably re-appear for a few nights, expressly for the gratification of her Royal Highness.

‘Our charming countrywoman, Miss Edgworth, has a great reputation here; and no wonder, for her writings are certainly captivating in the extreme. We little think, dear Nelly, how much we are indebted to those writers who instruct while they amuse; and who, while imbuing the heart with the principles of virtue, charm the imagination and exalt the taste by infusing their very essence into our thoughts. We know not the nights of reflection and the days of labour bestowed but on a single work of fiction, thus consecrated to the noble purpose of awakening in the soul those celestial ideas that are latent in it, and which must have been derived alone from that Divine Source whence man first drew his breath of life.

‘You are aware that I know but little of Protestant prelates, but I will relate to you a touching anecdote which I heard of the Bishop of Gloucester, at a

dinner-party last week. It is characteristic of a self-denying, good, and much more devoted man than we have been accustomed to consider Protestant priests of any denomination. Alas! how much wrong is committed in ignorance!

‘But to my anecdote.

‘If you ever chance,’ said the narrator, ‘to find yourself, at three or four o’clock, on the appointed morning of an execution, in sight of one of the condemned cells in Newgate, and should see a venerable-looking man in the habiliments of a priest, entering it—that man is the Bishop of Gloucester!’

‘You will not be surprised that, after hearing this anecdote, I was desirous of hearing the bishop preach. It so happened that on Sunday last he had engaged to preach a charity sermon at St. George’s Church, which is close by our residence, and whither my aunt, papa, and I went to hear him.

‘His text was, ‘God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship him in spirit and in truth.’ My conscience was deeply touched, as the bishop dilated upon this statement of God’s requirement. I could not reflect upon my accustomed lip-worship, while my thoughts were far from God, nor upon the images before which I have so often bent, without shuddering. I fear, indeed, that many of us are not only ignorant of what it is to worship ‘in spirit and in truth,’ but also of the nature of that Being who requires such worship. A painful

solemnity of feeling and of thought absorbed me the remainder of the day. Happily, I had a Bible, which my aunt had given me. It is an astonishing book, dear Nelly; and when the thought that it was written by the finger of God upon the minds of holy men of old presses itself upon the imagination of the reader, he is brought almost into the Divine presence, and seems to hear the voice of God, as the first man heard it in the Garden of Eden.

‘Papa and mamma appear to be in their usual health, though sadly out of their element here. We are hurrying to Paris, in the hope of being in time to witness the marriage ceremony of the Duc de Berri, at the Tuileries, with a Neapolitan princess.

‘I know not how we shall arrange a future correspondence with you, dearest Nelly. There are so many impediments on the Continent, I am told, to a safe and regular transit of letters, except by our ambassador’s bags, which only in Paris or Vienna could be readily obtained, that you must not be alarmed if you do not hear from us regularly. Forget not our reverential regards to the bishop, nor how much I am, my dearest sister,

‘Your ever devoted

‘DORA.’

## CHAPTER XII.

Shades of departed joys around me rise,  
With many a face that smiles on me no more.  
SAMUEL ROGERS.

**A**LTHOUGH I knew beforehand what must take place, yet a new feeling of isolation ran through my frame, when I was first informed of the actual embarkation for a foreign shore of those dear relatives from whom, for the first time, I had been so lately severed. Every relic of them and of our deserted home became doubly dear to me. Rover was caressed with tears, and the low, tender whine with which he recognised them seemed comfort to my heart. Even my pony, as I spoke to him of the stable and manger that he would see no more, responded by a gentle neigh; while the groom, touched by the recollections of his late home, patted the pony fondly, and, with solemn earnestness, promised me that 'Daffy' should be cared for like a child.

Mary—my good and affectionate Mary, who entered into all my home-sorrows—would have been spoilt at this time, if indulgence could have spoilt

her. I was very thankful for these remnants of happiness departed; although I sometimes became cold and inanimate as marble, if, sitting alone unoccupied, I fell into retrospection of what, at that time, seemed my long life. It was like walking amongst tombs to review the past; and to visit in fancy one object, one locality after another, from which the breath of life, the living spirits that once animated them, had departed, and the deep silence that now reigned in those echoing halls of my childhood, where love and joy once held their vigils, was appalling even in thought!

This proneness to reverie, so baneful to health, and so subversive of the resolutions I had formed for the government of myself, I generally endeavoured, though not always with success, to avoid by a constant variety of occupation and exercise. Mary, like most country girls, knew something of managing a horse; and with a little instruction, she soon became proficient enough in riding to accompany me in this daily exercise, which I had never enjoyed when attended only by a groom.

As a preparation for other employment, I found riding delightful and effectual, as I was able after it to read with awakened faculties, and a closeness of application which is productive of a satisfaction that listless occupation never affords. New ideas and new facts nourished and expanded my faculties, and the state in which I lived began to have charms for me.

My good aunt sent me from London the popular music of the day, and practice on the harp or piano filled up the intervals of more serious occupation.

I seldom saw my uncle oftener than once a day—sometimes but once a week, according as his duties, which were generally absorbing, occupied him. As my uncle scarcely ever dined with me, my table was accustomed to be served for myself alone; and although I felt, at first, like a prisoner immured for some offence, and cut off from sympathy with his kind, I became at length satisfied with eating alone. At first my table was luxuriantly covered, but I could not approve of this sort of parade; and by expostulation with the housekeeper, the supplies were simplified, so as better to suit the taste of youth and health.

My uncle possessed an ample income, and seemed to consider it due to his dignity that his niece should be surrounded by profusion and show; while in his own personal gratifications, the poorest priest in his diocese was not more abstinent and self-denying. This trait in his character inspired me with reverence, and induced me to aim at emulating it.

But I was not long permitted to pursue without interruption the way of life I had proposed to myself, as no sooner were the female friends of my uncle aware of my having been adopted by him, than they hastened to pay homage to him by attentions to his niece. He had no very near neighbours, but Cork

and its vicinity supplied me with a constant succession of morning visitors, who, as the season for social entertainments arrived, covered my table with invitations, and sought me with an ardour so flattering, that, much as I was desirous of framing excuses for declining their proffered hospitalities, I felt it would be ungrateful, both to my uncle and his friends, not to accept them.

Every kind and considerate attention was shown me on my first introduction to the society of Cork and its vicinity ; nor would it have been possible for querulousness or dejection itself to have resisted the genial influence of so flattering a welcome as I everywhere received. Living always amongst my own family, I had been accustomed to be loved ; it was therefore but a return to former delight to awaken the sympathies of those around me, and to receive from them expressions of endearment. But when I met with parents and children mingling together, and reciprocating offices of affection, what I had lost by separation from my family was vividly recalled, and filled me with sadness in the midst of gaiety.

The first entrance of a novice into society is always an experiment upon herself, but an experiment also on the world around her.

The courtesies of the festive scene, although I had been accustomed to behold them in my father's house, were seen there only with the eye of a child, who bore no part in them, and who contemplated them



but as a spectacle to amuse her. Now that I had become a sharer in them, I was charmed with the importance they appeared to confer on me, but far more with the solace they offered to my heart, so long as I construed them to mean kindness. They diminished in value as their conventional character betrayed itself, and I was compelled to perceive there was nothing intrinsic in them. Only my inexperience could have led me into the error of believing them to be indications of attachment. Nevertheless, my heart was lacerated and thrown back upon itself, when the illusion was dispelled.

Eventually, I discovered that I was not formed for what is called pleasure, and that the pursuit of it was but strenuous idleness, which, while exciting, was unsatisfying, leaving its votary without purpose, vapid, querulous, and unthankful—yes, and ungrateful, too, for although I was praised and admired beyond all reason and moderation, I was dissatisfied. I wanted something more than to be entitled one of the ‘Graces,’ or to be pronounced a ‘Psyche,’ or to be told that I was an ‘enchantress.’ Even sonnets to my ‘eyes of violet,’ my ‘locks of auburn,’ or my ‘nose of more worth than a kingdom,’ did not interest me. I know not how it was, but these epithets—ungrateful as I was—sounded like mockery, and I wanted some one to whom, on my return from an assembly, I could relate all the extravagances that had been addressed to me, and with whom I

might have laughed or wept, as mirth or melancholy was in the ascendant.

The day after a ball, I had so many anonymous love-letters that I began to be afraid, at a succeeding party, to reply to the various *rattle* addressed to me in dancing, lest I might get, unawares, entangled in an engagement. But there was no retreating until the end of the season, as it was my uncle's will that I should see something of the world, as he was pleased to call the assemblies of Cork. At length, as a constant repetition of flatteries continued to pursue me everywhere, I became so accustomed to them, as to expect and consider them due to me, as part of my evening's entertainment. Oh, perverting, debasing adulation ! how many weak heads hast thou turned, how many kind hearts made callous, how many docile natures led astray !

Towards the end of the season, an incident occurred in which my feelings were deeply interested.

A very distinguished Parisian artist had been introduced into some of the circles in which I visited, who was so much lauded and courted by everybody, that I could not avoid observing him. He was never introduced to me, but I observed his eyes so constantly following me, that his incessant observance became like a persecution. I was sometimes on the point of shedding tears at it, so much did it affect my imagination. Very soon, however, he disap-

peared ; I did not ask whither he had gone, and I forgot him.

One day, some time after, as I was driving through Cork in one of my uncle's carriages, I saw a painting of a full-length female figure, at a shop window, which seemed, at the first glance, so familiar to me, that I looked intently at it, when, to my great astonishment, I discovered it was a painting of myself. A crowd of persons was standing before the picture, commenting on it, and amongst them some young men whom I knew, who, on recognising me, flew to the carriage window, exclaiming sportively, that a 'divine-looking creature,' resembling me, was then receiving the homage of the mob.

I was excessively annoyed, and drove on as fast as possible, complaining to my uncle, on my arrival at home, of what had occurred, and begging him to ascertain how such an impertinence could have originated, as that of making me a public gazing stock, without my permission or knowledge.

How little did I suspect the author of this offence ! It proved, however, to be the French artist, whom I have already mentioned, and who had been sent to Cork by Monsieur de Grammont, expressly to obtain a likeness of me for himself—not certainly to be exhibited to the public of Cork.

My uncle's interference for the removal of the picture from a public window became unnecessary, as by the time his messenger had reached the place of

exhibition, both picture and painter were crossing the Channel. Some of my friends had remonstrated with the artist previous to his departure, for the offensive publicity which had been given to the painting, who excused himself by saying that he had exhibited it solely to test the resemblance, and the experiment had satisfied him, by the recognition it had obtained.

When I learnt for whom this painting had been made, what a rush of rapturous sensations filled my heart! What did not this incident imply of constancy in the sentiments of Léonce! I blessed the accident that had made me acquainted with it, not doubting that this mute resemblance would plead for me in absence, and prevent me from being forgotten; for although I confided fully in Léonce, as though I had exchanged vows of marriage with him, yet, holding no kind of intercourse with him, anxious thoughts would sometimes assail me for the fallibility of human memory.

I had reason to regret my too jealous pride in complaining to my uncle of the exposure of my picture, as it furnished him with an apparent cause for attributing 'indelicacy and impertinence' to Monsieur de Grammont—qualities which, he said, were characteristic of Protestants all over the world, who never knew how to reverence anything, except their own 'peculiar and damning heresies.'

I did not venture to palliate or explain what he condemned, as it was too painful to me to hear Monsieur de

Grammont thus spoken of, and I had no hope of convincing my uncle of the wrong he did him.

The visiting season was not yet over, and my uncle, irritated by the affair of the picture, resolved that I should not again appear in public in any dress I had worn during the preceding part of the season. Without my being consulted, a London *modiste* was engaged to furnish me with new and costly dresses, in which I was destined to eclipse myself, as well as my compeers, thus asserting my own superiority and my uncle's prodigality. It was not without anxiety that I heard of this preparation for a distinction which I did not covet; it would have been more agreeable to me to have been attired simply as hitherto, so as not to attract attention, as it always intimidated me to find myself distinguished by anything strikingly different from those around me. In this case, the London costumes provided for me were so far in advance of the newest modes of Cork, as to be very remarkable, and although it was impossible not to admire their perfect elegance, I felt that I was too young to take the lead in fashion, and too timid to bear the censures which such an assumption was certain to bring on me.

I ventured to express somewhat of this to my uncle, but it only made him more determined to distinguish me, and show the world his opinion of what was due to his niece. I suspected that he had another motive: perhaps I did him wrong; but from

some expressions which one day escaped him, I thought he was desirous of making me conspicuous for vanity, so as to render me offensive to Monsieur de Grammont, who he presumed would hear of my display, and thus be rent from me by my own folly.

The incident of the painting had incensed him to a great degree, and filled him with vague apprehensions, so that he could not be persuaded but that Monsieur de Grammont was living disguised in our neighbourhood, and keeping a perpetual vigil on me. Under this impression, he gave me peremptory orders never to stir out of the house without the attendance of two men servants. The restraint which this requirement imposed on me put an end to my pleasant country walks with Mary, and even to my saunterings in the park and garden, whither I found myself constantly pursued, as though I had been insane. I soon learnt that even when I attended a party I was to be accompanied by my uncle, or a priest of his household.

I was so frightened by this perpetual parade of looking after me, and so apprehensive that it might end in putting me into a convent for life, that I wrote to my aunt in London, telling her of my position and my fears, and begging her to invite me to her house. She replied that she would immediately do as I requested her, although she feared it would prove useless, as she thought the bishop's plans for me were formed, and would require me to remain

where I was. I never heard from her again on the subject.

Every letter addressed to me, from whatever quarter, was externally examined and inquired about, before I was allowed to open it, and then only in the presence of my uncle. As I had no correspondents but amongst my own dear family, there were no discoveries to make; but it mortified me to be obliged to expose the many anonymous and foolish love-letters which still continued to be addressed to me, both in verse and prose.

The first time I wore one of my London dresses, my uncle inspected my appearance before I went out, and informed me that he should join the party to which I was going for half-an-hour before it broke up, and himself bring me home. I had hitherto been accustomed to be attended inside the carriage only by Mary, whom I had always considered sufficient to afford me ample protection. However, there could be no possible objection to a double guard, if it was thought necessary, and I submitted with as good a grace as I could to a priest's seating himself by the side of Mary.

The incident of the picture had become known to the whole circle, on the evening in question, by the time I reached the assembly; so that I now appeared in a new character, every one looking upon me as an engaged person, which delivered me from much of the excessive attention that had hitherto been paid

me by those whom I suspected of being the authors of the anonymous love-letters.

When my uncle arrived, with his attendant priests, he created a great sensation in the circle, and seemed in unusual health and spirits. After greeting his friends, he took my arm, and drawing it within his, desired me, as we walked round the room, to point out to him those young men whom I supposed to have written the silly letters he had seen.

I was so terrified at the idea of being called upon to turn informer thus at random against those from whom I had received only a ridiculous excess of homage, that it almost made me ill; for I was apprehensive that my uncle, under some impetuous or eccentric impulse, might call them to account at a venture, on the spot. I was so agitated as to be obliged to sit down; and drawing my uncle away to the most obscure corner I could find, prevailed on him to take a seat by my side. From this nook he again required me to point out those in the assembly who had been most attentive to me.

I evaded his requirement by telling him that it would be invidious in me to make distinctions, where every one had shown me so much courtesy. He was not satisfied with this reply; and I earnestly hoped within myself never to attend another of these parties, since every frivolity was to be thus scrutinized and accounted for, and perhaps impressed with a meaning which had never been dreamt of.



My head was bewildered, and my ordinary perception at a stand, in trying to discern my uncle's object in all his perplexing questionings and embarrassing arrangements for my safety. Observation was ever on me, and those around me were 'taking notes.'

I had not heard from my family for some time, but as we arrived at home after the party I have mentioned, a letter from Paris was awaiting me, from my sister Dora. It was dated four months back, for although destined for the ambassador's bag, it had not come by that conveyance, and had probably been miss-sent, as it had been so long detained on its way.

Considering the prevalent practice at that time of breaking seals in the Paris post-office, it surprised me, when I had read the saucy contents of my sister's letter, that it had ever reached me at all; but there was a freedom of speech in Parisian society, after the second return of Louis XVIII., respecting the royalties of the day, which would not in ordinary times have been tolerated.

My father's party had been presented at the court of the Tuileries, and been very flatteringly received, as all British subjects were at that time, by the royal family of France. Dora expressed in her letter an apprehension that papa and mamma were not in their usual health. They were, she said, fatigued and dispirited by perpetual movement and the dis-

comforts of change, but they were looking forward to a period of repose when they reached Vienna. My sister still dated from the hôtel of my uncle the Count de Carryfort, by whom the whole family had been entertained, during a long visit, with true Irish hospitality.

Their stay in Paris was to be continued but a very short time longer, and my sister's marriage had been deferred until the arrival of the party at Vienna. Sir Lucius MacNeil had preceded them thither, to apprise my uncle, the baron, of the time when he might expect his guests, and also to make arrangements for his own sojourn there.

The priest suspected of being the accomplice of Margaret Brian, was encountered by my father in one of the streets of Paris; but as he endeavoured to seize him, there was a recognition on the part of the priest, which induced him to take to his heels; and he being no doubt well acquainted with the hiding-places of Paris, was out of sight in a moment. M. de Carryfort had been already informed of the affair of the stolen jewels, and of the parties suspected of abstracting them; and now that one of them had been seen in the streets, he advised my father to apply at once to the police, and require aid for the discovery of the priest. Within a week he was found; but, too wise to await an investigation, he took refuge in the protection of the church, from which it would have been impossible, without a pro-

cess of law, to withdraw him. My father demanded him of his ecclesiastical superiors, on the ground of a felony having been committed in Ireland, in which he was suspected of being an actor.

But they asserted their right to withhold him, and vindicated the offence alleged in a way that indicated some knowledge of the circumstances of the case; and concluded by telling my father that, by the civil law of France there was no redress there for a felony committed in another country, even if it could be proved. It was therefore thought necessary to await the chances of the future; and make no further attempt, at present, for the discovery of the criminals.

The terms in which Dora had spoken of the health of my father and mother filled me with anxiety, nor could I persuade myself but that they must be seriously unwell. On the following morning, however, a very cheerful letter arrived from my father to my uncle, informing him of the party's having reached Vienna, and of the unbounded warmth and welcome with which they had been received by my mother's brother, whom she had not before seen since her marriage.

It would have been difficult for me to decide whether pain or pleasure predominated, after perusing such memorials of a separation which more than ever realized the certainty of the distance that intervened betwixt us.

## CHAPTER XIII.

When I heard that thou wast dead,  
Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed ?

COWPER.

IT was about a fortnight after this period that I was again engaged to an evening party in the vicinity of Cork. It was professedly to be a small and select party ; but rumour said that it would be given with unusual splendour.

My uncle was amongst the invited guests, and I received from him directions to attire myself in one of my London dresses, with great care. I obeyed his directions, and succeeded in dressing myself perfectly to his satisfaction.

There was some unusual parade on this occasion in the arrangements for our drive, though it was not longer than five miles. A new chariot and four of my uncle's, fitted with patent lamps, and brilliantly lighted, was brought to the door of the hall, preceded by the old coach, bearing the attendant priests of the household. Mary, who was always anxious to see the wraps provided for my return put carefully

into the carriage with me, was standing in the hall, as my uncle took my hand to lead me out.

It was the ordinary time for the arrival of the post, and a servant stepped quickly across the hall from an inner door, just at that moment, with the accustomed salver of letters, which he presented to my uncle, inquiring if he should carry them to his study. As my uncle glanced at them, he observed a large packet with a black seal on it, and instantly dropping my hand, seized the portentous-looking letter, and hurried with it through the library into his private study.

I had caught a glimpse of the black seal, and was following him without knowing that I did so. As he was closing the study door, he turned to me, and said, mildly,—‘Be not alarmed, my dear; I will let you know if there is anything here that concerns you.’

I saw, however, that he was agitated—doubtless he had recognised the post-mark. I had waited in fearful silence many minutes, leaning on the arm of Mary, when I heard stifled exclamations and bursts of feeling from the study, which told me but too truly, that whatever the contents of the letter, they must be terrible to my uncle, as he was not wont on ordinary occasions to suffer from immoderate feeling.

My thoughts were already in Vienna, but I tore them away; for it was not endurable to suppose there could be any connexion betwixt the black seal

and it. Nevertheless, my apprehensions were agonising, and I knelt down, almost prostrate on the floor, as if in that attitude I could better bear whatever infliction might await me. Mary reminded me that my uncle had a large circle of correspondents, and his lordship, she said, must have many friends whom I knew not. It was therefore probable that his violent emotions might be caused by some occurrence wholly unconnected with his own family.

I was willing to think that she was right, and that it was indeed premature, if not ridiculous, for me to agitate myself with my own imaginings.

I arose and moved across the room, nearer to the study door, and again heard groans and sobs. 'Mary,' said I, softly, 'it is worse than you imagine!' I leant over the back of a chair, in a paroxysm of suspense and fear.

The study door opened—I was full in front of it—and lifting up my head, I saw my uncle, pale as death, standing in the doorway, in an attitude of distraction. As his eyes met mine, he exclaimed, in a voice of passionate emotion,—'Go! child of the dead! Cover thyself with sackcloth, and put ashes on thy beautiful head! for thy father lieth down, and riseth not again, until the heavens be no more!'

As these terrible and but too descriptive words fell on my ear, they pierced my soul; my heart was rent—a shriek of horror burst from me—I felt my-

self falling, and for a brief space I escaped from consciousness.

\* \* \* \* \*

But it too soon returned, and although in the first moments of recovery I was insensible to what had occurred, and gazed vacantly on those around me, the dreadful reality was soon recalled, and with it came to my recollection a former awaking from a similar death, when a dear mother and sisters hung over me, and a beloved father's voice greeted my recovery.

Then came on the hour of quick, conscious, overwhelming agony, from which I could not again escape into insensibility, although I desired it as ardently as one of old, who in his anguish exclaimed, 'Oh that thou wouldst hide me in the grave!'

But we cannot die when we would; we must wait 'till our change come.' I refused all restoratives, all aid, whispering to Mary that I would be alone. It was not without effort that she succeeded in obtaining this boon for me, but after awhile I was left to silence and to prayer. It is in such moments that we draw near to God,—in such moments that the suppliant sufferer finds access to him, and that Divine compassion stoops to listen to his sighs.

\* \* \* \* \*

Oh, how many days, and weeks, and months, must the lacerated heart continue to bleed, under

such a bereavement as mine, ere it can accustom itself to the loss! Amongst the many afflicting events that have since marked my lot, none ever inflicted severer pangs than those caused by my dear father's death.

Although my first winter in society had not been a trance of pleasure, my feelings had no doubt been deteriorated by the follies and flatteries which had become familiar to me, and which, though I did not approve, I had learnt to tolerate. The dreadful shock I had received wrenched me at once from these follies, and filled me with a loathing of everything connected with them. The thought that at the very instant, perhaps, when the spirit of my father had been engaged in the last terrific conflict, *I* had been occupied in heartless gaiety and contemptible display, was like a dagger to my heart. I demanded of myself why I had been unconscious of the approaching evil—why some dark presage had not cast its shadows over me, to solemnize and prepare my too undisciplined nature for the infliction that awaited me. But, alas! neither grief nor self-crimination could restore to me my father, and my sorrow was unutterable!

A father is indeed a tender friend ;  
 And if once lost, we never more shall find  
 A bosom that so tremblingly can blend  
 Its feelings with our own congenial mind.  
 Our lips may speak our anguish to the wind,  
 That hurries heedlessly and wildly by ;  
 Our hearts, to lonely agony consigned  
 May throb without relief, for no reply



Comes from the tomb where his dear ashes lie ;  
And then, we pause to think—alas ! too late—  
Of follies that once wrung his breast with pain ;  
And oh, could we but open Death's dark gate,  
And lead him back into our world again—  
Oh, but once more behold his face—'tis vain !  
Once more but hear his voice—'tis sweetly driven  
Across our fancy, and expires—and then  
We wish ourselves away—away to heaven,  
To weep upon his breast, and there to be forgiven.

AMERICAN PAPER.

The entrance of death into any circle disenchant's life awhile of its illusions, rendering its ordinary pursuits worse than futile, and its most legitimate objects uninteresting and contemptible. Our hearts die within us as we contemplate the humiliation of our nature in the senseless corpse, or in the dust and ashes to which it is so soon to be reduced. Yet what is the destruction of the body compared with that apparent extinction of the mind, that sudden quenching of the 'divinity in man,' which takes place at death? In that moment 'all his thoughts perish!' It is this fearful spectacle of impotence and departed glory that appals and confounds the living. Death is an evil for which neither reason nor philosophy furnishes any mitigation or consolation. Religion alone, which instructs us in the immortality of the soul, and assures us of a resurrection to come, rescues the heart from despair, and redeems our nature from scorn. A being possessed of powers so vast and so varied as those of man, condemned to an existence so fragile as that which appertains to

his physical nature, would be at once an object of commiseration and contempt to himself and the whole universe, were not the immortality of his soul secured on an imperishable basis.

It was the divine doctrine of the resurrection that sustained me under my affliction at this period. I had never before reflected on it with a feeling of personal interest in it, or attached to it that immense importance which it bears in the system of Christianity. ‘He shall rise again,’ are Divine words, which I repeated to my heart whenever it began afresh to sink; and although I well knew, from the tenour of the New Testament, that the state of my dear father must be fixed, yet so agonizingly did I desire his eternal happiness, that I could not but join in the prayers that were offered for the repose of his soul, as if they had been those of faith. It was not in the spirit of popery that I did this: my aspirations were but the irrepressible outpourings of love and apprehension for an earthly parent, to that Almighty Father in heaven whose compassions are infinite.

The offices of religion had become far more than ever necessary to me; I could not live without them. I needed to be brought into hourly intercourse with Him who is invisible, that I might lean upon his everlasting arm, and be saved from myself, and from that feeling of nothingness into which I was for ever sinking. Under this want of Divine aid, I often found myself worshipping in a church against whose

many and signal errors my understanding and my conscience continued to bear the most decided testimony. But in remembering the character and requirements of Him with whom we have to do, I became satisfied, that as I could not, at that time, worship him in any other church, I might, like Naaman the Syrian, when his duty to an earthly power carried him to 'the house of Rimmon,' be also forgiven, and go in the assurance of that forgiveness, although no prophet's voice had said to me, as to him, 'Go in peace.'

## CHAPTER XIV.

What, cardinal, is your priesthood grown so peremptory ?  
 Churchmen so hot ? good uncle, hide such malice ;  
 With such holiness, can you do it ?

SHAKSPEARE.

SEVERAL weeks had passed, during which I received letters from my sisters ; but they did not contribute to my tranquillity, as they imparted none of those particulars preceding and accompanying the event of my father's death which it would have been so gratifying to me to know. My sisters were, indeed, evidently too distracted by their grief to be able to dilate on the subject, or even to write tranquilly on it ; and in this I saw an aggravation of the calamity. Of my mother I learnt nothing, but that she was overwhelmed by the stroke ; and Sir Lucius MacNeil—almost a brother—was not named or alluded to.

My uncle, meantime, began to exhibit serious symptoms of declining health. He had never recovered the shock of my father's death, and had, indeed, become a very altered man in all respects since that event, and his present appearance and symptoms inspired me with the deepest anxiety.

He frequently spent his evenings with me, and would sometimes converse freely respecting my family and their future prospects. My brother was not yet of age, and accounts of a painful nature respecting his health and conduct had more than once been communicated by my mother, previous to my father's death, so that we were not without considerable uneasiness on his account.

My uncle's health did not improve with the season of spring, and I frequently visited his apartments, to pay him those attentions which my affection and anxiety for him dictated. This practice had grown into a habit, when one day, on entering his study, I found there a gentleman who was a stranger to me. I was making a precipitate retreat, when my uncle commanded me to return, and at the same instant introduced Mr. Fitzgerald to me, who addressed me at once with so easy an air of assurance, that I could not but feel displeased. He was young and handsome, but there was an expression in his eye which made me shrink from his glance. I was not long in finding a pretext for withdrawing, but Mr. Fitzgerald remained with my uncle a long time after I had left the room, and on the same evening, my uncle formally sent to desire my attendance in his study. I obeyed the summons, and found him more indisposed and more serious than usual.

After recognising my entrance by a slight nod, he

sat looking into the fire, as if in deep and painful rumination. I did not presume to interrupt him by making any inquiries, and he at length broke a silence which was becoming portentous to me, by saying,—

‘This has been a day of events, my dear Helen, and some of them of a distressing nature; but we are not the arbiters of destiny, and can neither prevent nor ward off that which has been appointed for us.’

‘What has happened, my dear uncle? Have you received any intelligence from Germany? Is my mother ill—or my brother worse?’ I asked, with a trembling heart.

‘I have received letters,’ said my uncle.

‘Are there none for me?’

‘Yes, there are also letters for you; but I wish to prepare you for their contents. Your brother——’

My uncle paused, unable to finish his sentence. I anticipated all he would say, but could not make any rejoinder. In a faltering tone, he added—

‘Your brother is no more!’

After a short pause, he continued, ‘By his death, the estate goes to your uncle in London; and your mother and sisters are, by this terrible event, robbed of every pecuniary resource, except your mother’s small hereditary property. You see, my dear Helen, and feel too, how distressing these melancholy occurrences, one after another, must be to your poor

mother and sisters. It is well, at this period of calamities, that they are with your uncle the baron, at Vienna. Providence is also merciful to us, in sending the good to balance the evil; in proof of which, I have to communicate to you information which, though it cannot at this moment interest you as much as it might do at another time, will not, I hope displease you. I have this day received for you an offer of marriage, from a young man whom I greatly approve, and to whom I wish almost as well as I do to you. I hope, therefore, that when you become acquainted with him, you will find him agreeable enough for a husband.'

My uncle paused for a reply, but I could make none; my faculties were completely stunned.

'You must excuse my announcing, in one interview, such discordant occurrences, my dear child; I do not feel well, and my mind is greatly affected by the adversities that have befallen your family. It is my intention to do all in my power to mitigate them; and there are circumstances in my health which admonish me, that in accomplishing this I ought to lose no time.'

A painful silence succeeded this last speech, interrupted only by my sobs and tears, which I had no power to restrain. I know not how my uncle was occupied, for I did not uncover my eyes; but after pacing some time up and down the room with an agitated step, he rang for Mrs. O'Grady, at whose ap-

pearance he kissed me tenderly, and confiding me to her care, desired her to accompany me to my own rooms.

Events appeared to be conducting the fortunes of my family rapidly to a frightful crisis. My father and brother both dead—the estate lost to the family—and my mother and sisters reduced thereby to comparative indigence; my uncle in declining health, and myself called upon to make an immediate decision on a question which could not but be most repugnant to me, how much soever insisted on by my uncle. Had I not already had some experience in suffering, I should have sunk under it.

I dismissed Mrs. O'Grady, and in the solitude of my own apartment gained sufficient fortitude to peruse my letters. They informed me but too soon of the cause of my brother's death. He had been killed on the spot in a duel, his antagonist surviving him only a few hours. How much cause did I find in such a death for that grief which admits of no consolation! I dared not reflect on it, and I almost equally feared to turn to the pecuniary distresses of my mother.

My uncle, like myself, passed a sleepless night; and in the morning appeared to be much more indisposed than he had been the day before.

He renewed the subject of the marriage proposal with an earnestness of manner that made me afraid to express the determination I had formed to decline it, although my repugnance became, if possible,



stronger, when I was informed that my suitor was Mr. Fitzgerald.

I now remembered to have seen him at the winter balls, although he had never been introduced to me ; and in the interval that had elapsed, he had entirely faded from my memory.

It was impossible for any suit to have been advocated with more zeal, by a third person, than was Mr. Fitzgerald's by my uncle ; but the state both of my affections and my family affairs rendered it an odious subject to my thoughts, and nothing but the too visible indisposition of my uncle could have induced me to remain in his society while he made it the theme of his conversation.

I endeavoured to convince him that not only was I disinclined to think at all of marriage, but that Mr. Fitzgerald was by no means the man I could ever accept as a husband.

This assertion, made perhaps in too decided terms, irritated my uncle ; and he reproached me with my partiality for protestants and foreigners as the cause of my dislike. Then, regarding me with a fixed seriousness of look, while great depression was marked on his face, he addressed me in a solemn tone, as nearly as I can recollect, in the following words :

‘ My dear Helen, when your father gave you to me, I engaged to be to you what he had it not in his power to be—the provider for your future life. The misfortunes that have happened to your mother

and sisters in his death, and subsequently in the loss of the estate by the death of your brother, have rendered the fulfilment of my engagement more difficult than I had supposed it would be. Had I only you to provide for, I could leave you a fortune sufficient to secure you an ample independence, and consequently your freedom on the subject of marriage. But now, situated as your mother and sisters are, it is incumbent on me to divide that property which was intended to have been wholly yours, amongst you all. I had begun to feel a distressing anxiety on account of the necessity of thus reducing your station in life, when Mr. Fitzgerald made a proposal of marriage for you. I hailed this occurrence as an intervention of Providence on your behalf, as well as mine; for Mr. Fitzgerald is in possession of an income of ten thousand per annum, and will make a competent settlement on you; which, in addition to what I shall still be able to do for you, will place you in very easy circumstances, and enable you to retain that consideration in society to which you are entitled. Fitzgerald is well-born, well connected, well educated, and, I believe, without vices; and to crown all, he seems to have been deeply impressed in your favour, my dear Helen,' said my uncle, smiling, 'since he has cherished in silence an attachment formed two or three months since.'

'But, my dear uncle, I do not like Mr. Fitzgerald; and I assure you I would rather live single my whole

life than marry him. I have no desire to marry at present: it could not increase my happiness, and it would, besides, take me from you. Inform Mr. Fitzgerald of my sentiments, and assure him that I am too incapable of attachment to be worthy of him. He has my best wishes for his happiness.'

My uncle shook his head angrily.

'How like a simpleton you talk,' said he. 'What are you to do when your uncle, as well as your father and brother, is no more? Look at me, child; do you not see disease in my countenance? Do you not know that death is in its train? Have you reflected on what it would be for you to be left in this jostling world without a male protector? To whom will you look to stand between you and those rapacious spirits that are ever on the watch to make a prey of the defenceless? Were you married to Fitzgerald, you might offer both a protector and an asylum to your mother and sisters; and in making the happiness of an excellent man, you would become the dispenser of it to your whole circle. One thing I demand of you, in the name of that parent who is not here to require it for himself,—that you will, at least, receive the visits of Fitzgerald in my apartments, and in my society, and thus give yourself an opportunity of becoming acquainted with him, and of ascertaining his merits—that you may not throw away a gem in ignorance of its value. I am quite aware of the present state of your feel-

ings, as well as of the unsuitableness of the moment for entertaining such a subject; but I have already given you my reasons for my reluctance to postpone it. Good God! the very idea of your being left without a home, and without a guide, subdues and destroys me. I give you two days to reflect on what I have said. I know that in a well-principled mind, duty is paramount to everything, and I anticipate your acquiescence in my requirement.'

So saying, he dismissed me to my apartment. My uncle was not mistaken in thinking me capable of sacrificing inclination to duty, provided the duty were ascertained; but in this case I could not discern how it had become my duty to barter at once sincerity, delicacy, and propriety, by receiving the visits of a man who was disagreeable to me, for the deliberate purpose of endeavouring to cultivate a sentiment which I felt it would be impossible for me to entertain.

Besides which, although it was a long time since I had heard anything of Monsieur de Grammont, except in the affair of the picture, and it had wounded me deeply that he had not addressed a single line of condolence, either to my uncle or myself, on the occasion of my father's death, yet I doubted not of the constancy of his attachment to me, nor could I root from my heart the tenderness he had inspired. I did not then know, nor for years after, that he had not omitted the dues of

courtesy on this occasion ; but that he had written a note to me, and with, a delicacy which belonged to all he did, had enclosed it, unsealed, in an address to my uncle, entreating him to hand it to me. My uncle had thought proper to suppress it, and to withhold from me all knowledge of the occurrence.

I ruminated day and night, of the interval allotted me for consideration, uncertain in what way to communicate to my uncle, in the least offensive manner, the determination I had formed from the first, to reject Mr. Fitzgerald's proposals. The more I reflected, the more I was convinced that it was as incompatible with honour as with inclination, and the consideration due to Mr. Fitzgerald, to suffer any further intercourse to take place, seeing there was no probability of my ever being able to realize the object proposed by it.

I imparted this conviction to my uncle by note, hoping that this mode of conveying my sentiments might prevent a renewal of the subject in conversation.

The expedient proved most disastrous. My note was no sooner perused, than it threw my uncle into a fit of anger, such as I had until then thought it impossible for him to be liable to under any circumstances.

No doubt much of the irritation was attributable to the state of his health, and his extreme anxiety on my account, although it was also evident that,

unaccustomed to opposition, the pride of authority had been wounded by my resistance to his will.

It was about an hour after I had sent my note, that a servant came running into my room, in great alarm, to beg that I would go instantly to the bishop, who, he said, appeared to be so ill that he almost feared he was dying.

The recollection of my note filled me with terror; and fearing that to intrude on my uncle uncalled for, in the first moments of his displeasure, might but increase rather than appease his agitation, I inquired if his lordship had sent me any message, and was informed that he was unable to speak. This intelligence put all my discretion to flight. Scarcely able to control my fears, I flew down stairs, and passing into his house in breathless agitation, rushed into my uncle's study.

He had thrown himself into an arm-chair, and sat with his head reclining on the back of it, while his left arm hung at its length over the elbow of the chair, with the offensive note in his hand. His eyes were closed, his features slightly convulsed, and his whole complexion pale as death, while his lower lip quivered violently. I moderated my haste at the first glance of him, and approached him softly. His appearance so shocked me, that an exclamation of alarm, which I was not able to suppress, caused him to open his eyes. The moment he perceived me, he drew himself up in his chair, and regarded

me with an air of such stern dignity as fixed me like a statue before him.

‘Pray, Miss Mulgrave,’ said he, with the most distinct articulation, and in a sarcastic tone of voice, ‘to what am I indebted for the honour of your presence here? You have chosen to adopt a new mode of intercourse with me, to which you should be consistent enough to confine yourself.’

‘Oh, my dear uncle,’ I exclaimed, throwing myself at his feet, ‘they told me you were very ill. How then could I coldly stand on ceremony, and await your permission to visit you? Indeed, I fear you are very ill—you look pale and agitated,’ and as I said this, I unconsciously threw a glance at the offensive note still in his hand. The recognition did not escape him, but seemed to renew his anger; for with a most perturbed air, he peremptorily desired me to rise and leave him. My distress on his account, however, forbade my compliance, without an effort to restore him to his wonted composure.

‘You are angry with me, my dear uncle,’ said I, ‘and you call me Miss Mulgrave, as if I were no longer your affectionate and devoted niece. What have I—’ here my uncle interrupted me with a sarcastic and bitter repetition of the words ‘affectionate and devoted’

‘These are words of derision, I presume, Miss Mulgrave, if they have any meaning at all. Persons who are ‘devoted and affectionate,’ are not accus-

tomed to treat with contempt the objects of their affection and devotion—to oppose their wishes—disdain their advice—and set at nought their commands. But I shall hold no further conference with a young lady whose acquiescence in a scheme of happiness, not of her own invention, would be solicited in vain, even by a parent from another world. I have nothing more to say, Miss Mulgrave; you may retire.’

How deeply did I feel at that moment that it was not a parent with whom I was conversing. I arose instantly from before him, and, retreating a few paces; said: ‘It is perhaps impertinent in me to attempt to reply to you, my lord, after having been commanded from your presence. But it is necessary that I say a few words in my own defence. I see that you are displeased at the note I have addressed to you. I assure you it was not without great pain that I yielded to the necessity of opposing your wishes. It is unnecessary for me to remind your lordship, that the affair on which you proffered me your permission to deliberate, and on which I have endeavoured to exercise my best judgment, is one in which I am so deeply concerned, that I had almost said, it is exclusively my own. And while I desire only to live under your roof, and to devote myself to the precious duties of your companion and nurse, surely you will not force me from you, or withhold that approbation, without which I should live but to be wretched.’



‘Helen,’ said my uncle, somewhat softened, ‘you have certainly a woman’s tongue in great perfection ; but it would please me better if it were associated with a woman’s sense. There are few of your sex, situated as you are, who would be idiots enough to refuse such an offer as Mr. Fitzgerald’s ; nor can I persuade myself you can be sincere in the absurd communication you have this morning made me, of what you are pleased to call your decision. Am I to believe that you have determined on being a beggar ? that you have calculated the distance between the palace and the hovel—and that you think it an easy step from the one to the other ? Or am I to consider the part you are playing as a trial at diplomacy ? Do you think to enhance the value of your compliance by the reluctance with which you accompany it ? If this be your object, spare yourself the trouble of pursuing it any further, with me at least, and reserve your experiments for Fitzgerald, who will doubtless be able to institute a counter-game, quite as subtle and quite as amusing.’

All this was uttered in a tone of such bitter irony, that I burst into tears. My uncle was more moved by my tears than by anything I had said, and, resuming his usual kindness of manner, said, ‘I see, my love, that you are sorry for what you have written, and will consent to my throwing your note into the fire, and to meeting Fitzgerald to-day at dinner. Remember, child, that your opposition will

be of no use to you ; although, certainly, I would rather you should be convinced that your compliance is but required to what is necessary to secure your own happiness.'

I perceived, notwithstanding the milder language and tone of my uncle, that I had approached the extremity of his forbearance, and that a single word might exceed its bound. Yet it appeared indispensable that I should make one effort more, in firmness of spirit, to convince him that vacillation of mind had not been the cause of my tears.

'My lord,' said I, 'I am aware of the duty I owe you as my uncle, and still more as my benefactor, and the representative of a beloved parent, whom I shall never see again on earth. My heart is deeply sensible of the ten thousand kindnesses I have received at your hands, since the day I came under your roof. I am aware, also, that I can never repay them. But I have given you—all I have to give—the reverence and the affection of my heart. I am happy in living near you, and I want, now, no other happiness, except that of seeing my mother and sisters, through your bounty and goodness, as happy as I am myself. If I have understood you aright, you have urged my acceptance of Mr. Fitzgerald, in apprehension of my being at some future time reduced below my present station ; will you permit me to say—and attribute it not to a want of delicacy that I presume to speak at all on such a

subject—I shall be quite satisfied with whatever portion of your property you may be pleased to bestow on me; and that I shall be content, whenever necessary, to contract my wants, so as neither to become destitute nor embarrassed, how limited soever my future fortune may be. Will not this assurance, my dear uncle, remove from your mind the kind and too anxious concern you entertain respecting my future lot? And will you not kindly, and for ever, discard the subject of Mr. Fitzgerald?’

‘Folly! madness!’ exclaimed my uncle, as he turned on me a countenance distorted by anger. ‘Do you suppose, Miss Mulgrave, that I will suffer a young lady whom I have introduced to the world as my niece and heiress, to sink down into the obscurity you propose, and, when I am no more, blast my name by the meanness of her condition, and rob my memory and my ashes of the respect due to them? No! My resolution is taken. You shall marry Fitzgerald, or I will disinherit and banish you at once from my protection; that, no longer identified with me, you may not bring on me the disgrace which must arise from your grovelling ideas of life and happiness! I want no reply: I will hear none. Fitzgerald dines here to-day. See that you are properly dressed, and in time in the drawing-room.’

Surprised and frightened, by this most sudden and violent burst of passion, I remained for several mi-

minutes riveted to the spot on which I stood, doubtful if I were really in my senses. Was it possible that, from my uncle—my pious and learned uncle—I had heard such an avowal of worldly feeling and personal pride?

My whole soul revolted against the despotism of his treatment, and my self-love was in every way deeply wounded by it.

Henceforth, I was to consider myself as only the plaything of his ambition—a mere shuttlecock, crested with the borrowed plumes of his dignity, and destined to be driven to and fro, in any direction that might be pleasing to him or to Mr. Fitzgerald. My heart swelled with indignation at the thought; for the lesson of humility I had received had not humbled me. I felt that the moment of fate had arrived, when perhaps my dear father's injunction was no longer binding. I must at once, said I, acquaint both my uncle and Mr. Fitzgerald that I am a Protestant. Who knows but that such a revelation might induce the latter to relinquish me? Upon second thoughts, this purpose was abandoned, as the desecration of a sacred instrument to a worldly purpose. No—I will not make such an avowal, until I can make it in a spirit of meekness and right feeling. But surely I may inform my uncle that my whole heart is devoted to Monsieur de Grammont? Impossible that, knowing this, he would compel me to utter the solemn vows of marriage to another? I must speak

now, or be for ever lost. Yet, how shall I make such a disclosure to so severe and prejudiced an adversary of Monsieur de Grammont? Fears of a *convent*, however, or of its hated alternative, caused a rebound of feeling that braced my nerves.

While these thoughts had successively passed with lightning speed through my mind, I was proceeding from the study through the library to my own apartments. I suddenly turned, and re-entered the study. My uncle, who was pacing it in hasty strides, stood still as I entered, and fixed on me a stare of surprise. Then moving towards the mantel-piece, leant against it with folded arms, and a look of disdain at once cool and petrifying. I felt that I must speak quickly, or retire. I therefore said, 'My lord, if you will give me a moment's further hearing, I beg to say that I think it my duty to confide to you what, perhaps, it had been better you had known before.'

My uncle, with apparently quickened attention, continued to gaze on me with haughty indifference, but still without a word, and I stammeringly proceeded. 'I believe, my lord, indeed, I think I am sure, that the Marquis de Grammont, though twice rejected' — I could get no further for several seconds, when I again commenced—'I was endeavouring, my lord, to mention to you that Monsieur de Grammont, notwithstanding his rejection, considers me as engaged to him, and I therefore could not accept the hand of any other gentleman in marriage, without his permission.'

A loud peal of mocking laughter was the response to this most painful disclosure; while I stood before him with my face covered with my hands, and my heart swelling with mortification. When the peal ended, he said, 'Have you anything more to tell me, Miss Mulgrave? You are perhaps married to the marquis?'

'No, my lord, I am not married to him, but I am bound in honour not to marry another. For I have accepted him, and we are mutually bound to each other.'

As I paused, quite out of breath, and frightened at my own rashness, my uncle approached me, and seizing my arm with a rude grasp, said—'Are you mad, or wicked, Miss Mulgrave? Is it my brother's child, my own adopted, who thus speaks to me of what the modesty of her sex and age should have found too sacred for utterance? Do you mean to propose yourself in person to the Marquis de Grammont? or do you wish me to write to him, and say that you are at his service? You would, it seems, marry a Protestant—perhaps, become one yourself—place yourself out of the pale of salvation—*sell* yourself to Satan—spurn everlasting life—and all for a renegade, as apostate in love as in faith; to whom you would as vainly recal his crude fancy for yourself, as the former devotion of his family to our holy church. But I will put a speedy end to all this; you are already the betrothed of Fitzgerald, the marriage articles are signed, and only your own insigni-

any further effort to save myself. I cared no more for life in any form, the brevity of it alone was consolatory, and who could tell but mine might be near its close.

If Léonce was happy—and, of course, he was—I would endeavour to rejoice in it, and none should know how much this effort cost me.

I had no long time for rumination. Long before the customary hour for dressing, Mary came into my room, with a message from my uncle, that Mr. Fitzgerald and he would dispense with my company at dinner that day, and recommending me to order the chariot, and take a drive.

As I was accustomed to obey every ordinary suggestion of this sort from him, and cared not, at that moment, what I did or where I went, Mary and I were soon driving rapidly on the road leading to Mulgrave Castle.

The retrospection awakened by this locality softened my feelings, and brought relief to my whole frame, in a flood of tears. When I became calm, I inquired of Mary if she knew anything of the newspaper that lay on my table. She said it was brought there by my uncle's valet, in my absence. The sickening intelligence, then, was known to my uncle, and placed before me by his orders. Perhaps it was this knowledge which induced him to laugh, and scoff so unmercifully, at the confidence I had so simply expressed in Monsieur de Grammont's constancy?

There are epochs in life which transform character almost in a single hour. I felt during my ride that my whole nature was changed, as it regarded all things in this world ; and that henceforth I should but fight my way through life, as the soldier through the ranks of his adversary on the field of battle.

Happy for me if I should also be enabled to fight that battle which wins everlasting life ! I threw myself back in the carriage, and, lifting up my agonized, yet still proud heart to God, found no acceptance with Him ; for, although they who mourn are promised comfort, it is only to the humble in spirit that celestial consolations are imparted. But the sense of wrong that filled my soul was so poignant and so bitter, that the humility of sincere devotion was far from me.

As the carriage stopped on our return, at my uncle's door, Mr. Fitzgerald presented himself to hand me out. I found this too much for me ; and, lingering as long as I could in the carriage, sobbed from vexation and a sense of insult. He no doubt had seen the Dublin paper, and was acting entirely under my uncle's orders. I sprang forward, as he waited my pleasure at the carriage-door, and flew by him, through my uncle's house to my own.

When I sat down to reflect on this discourtesy, I could hardly believe that I had been guilty of it ; but it was well done if it exempted me from further advances on the part of Fitzgerald. As I thus



thought, a gentle rap at my door startled me, and I was moving forward to open it, thinking it might be a conciliatory visit from my uncle, when it was opened from without, and Mr. Fitzgerald walked in, with an air somewhat less confident than usual, but still with the complacency of an acknowledged friend, sure of a welcome.

He left me not a moment for embarrassment, but approaching me with an extended hand, begged to lead me to a seat. I could not again run away. This childish game must end. I was therefore led unresistingly to a chair in a distant part of the room. Then, pretending it must be the wrong one, he marched me to another, and another, until I was ready to laugh and cry in a breath—and, snatching my hand away, I threw myself into the seat which stood nearest to me.

‘We are happy, my dear Miss Mulgrave,’ said he, with imperturbable gravity, ‘to have got over a serious difficulty so promptly.’ And, dropping himself into a chair next to mine, continued, ‘I hope you like the seat you have chosen?’

I turned my head to him with a repelling thought bursting for utterance, but, suppressing it, looked another way, and moved to a window. He followed me, and seeing there was no escape, I gathered up as much forbearance as I could muster, and sat quietly down in a lounging chair. He now stood before me, and assuming a look of solemnity foreign

to his nature, and which, therefore, looked like mockery, said, 'I have had permission from the bishop to invite myself to dine with you to-day, my dear Miss Mulgrave, if you do not forbid me.'

'I thought you were engaged to dine with my uncle? I am not in any way prepared for the honour of your company at my table, nor have I ever been accustomed to receive guests in my private apartments.'

'But under so high a sanction,—almost under the bishop's command,—you can have no objection, I hope, for once, to deviate from the rigid rule you have hitherto prescribed to yourself; especially—if I may be permitted to mention it,—the relation in which I hope so shortly to stand to you, should obtain for me at least an hour's private converse.'

'An *hour's* talk? Oh, pray say what you have to say at once. I will emulate your frankness, and we shall understand each other in five minutes.'

'Frankly, then,'—and he dropped on one knee as he spoke—'I am here to express my homage, and to offer you my hand, and a devoted heart. Will you not deign to accept the offering?'

'No, sir.'

'You will not? You are cruel, Miss Mulgrave,' said he, smiling, with an amused air.

Then rising, he drew a chair close beside me, and attempted to take my hand, but did not succeed.

'Mr. Fitzgerald,' said I, coldly, 'be not offended

at what it is necessary for me to say to you. I have no heart to present you, in exchange for yours, and I therefore beg to decline your offer, now and for ever.'

'Are you so insensible? Am I so hateful to you? Oh, Helen! if, like your namesake, a ten years' siege may win you, you will yet be mine. Are you prepared for so long a warfare? But I am sure you will relent. It cannot be, that so fair a form was created without a heart. What can you have done with it? Only tell me whither it has wandered, and I will fly to the most distant regions of the earth to fetch it back, in the hope of receiving it as my reward, with this fair hand, on my return,' raising my hand at the same instant abruptly to his lips.

I burst into tears at this freedom, feeling that he was indeed making a plaything of me at my uncle's prompting.

He rose at sight of my tears, and said he had not courage to behold them, nor could he ever forgive himself for causing them.

'How may I obliterate the offence I have given you?' said he.

'By leaving me,' said I.

'That is a cruel penance, but if you will say that it shall obtain my pardon, and give me but a hope of being permitted to wait on you to-morrow, I will relieve you instantly of my hated presence, and eat

my morsel of bread with bitter herbs below with the bishop, instead of feasting with you on the nectar and ambrosia of Olympus ;' and again seizing my hand, and pressing it to his lips, he flew out of the room.

I had observed more than once, while he was with me, a sort of excitement in look and manner, which suggested the idea of insanity or inebriety. Could it be possible that he was under the influence of either the one or the other? While I was thus questioning with myself, a tap at the door announced his return, and he was the next instant again in the room, shutting the door after him, which when he had done, he came up to me, and dropped on one knee before me, with a look of irony and extravagant merriment that alarmed me. I did not await an explanation, but darting past him, was out of the room in a moment. I locked myself into my chamber, which was too distant for me to hear his movements, and remained there until Mary announced my dinner. I inquired if any one was in the dining-room ; and as she said only the footman, I descended, and took my meal without disturbance.

The way in which Mr. Fitzgerald had compelled me to treat him was far from satisfactory to myself, yet I could not suggest any more effectual mode of quietly accomplishing an *affront* which might possibly relieve me from any further importunity on his part. As to my uncle, I dared not think of him ; but there was an effort yet to be made to deliver myself

from his persecutions, which could not be deferred, and I wrote him the following note:—

‘ My dear Uncle,

‘ You told me this morning that I was betrothed to Mr. Fitzgerald, and that the marriage articles were signed by all parties except myself. You remarked that my signature might be made by proxy. Of course, that could be only a jest, or an hyperbole of speech. I take it for granted, then, that my signature, in my own hand, is essential to such a contract. That being the case, I write—with all duteousness of feeling, whatever may be thought to the contrary—to say that nothing can induce me to sign the marriage articles in question, nor can I allow myself to utter false vows before the altar. Having, after much reflection, arrived at this decision, I hope you will not again permit Mr. Fitzgerald to be put to the useless trouble of making professions of attachment to me, to which my heart cannot respond.

‘ I pray you to pardon the terms in which I have framed this note, as it seemed to me due to all parties that I should be perfectly explicit. Deign to believe me still, my dear uncle, hoping for your indulgence, your most grateful niece,

‘ H. M.’

My protest thus made, Mr. Fitzgerald and his eccentricity were soon obliterated, except the con-

viction, which grew stronger on retrospection, that he was certainly in a state of partial inebriation, when he so ridiculously intruded himself on me. The great event of the day was, and would continue to be, an irreparable calamity, which must be borne in silence as best it might. It was one of those sorrows which cannot be participated, and which admits of no alleviation but in that resignation to the Divine will, attainable only after long suffering.

On the following morning, after breakfast, I sent my note of the last evening to my uncle, and learnt of the messenger who carried it that Mr. Fitzgerald was with him. The two gentlemen were then in council, and I endeavoured to think that I might bid defiance to fate, for that I could scarcely be placed, by any machinations, in a much worse position than I already was, even if the determination to force me into the marriage should be prosecuted with the energy of will peculiar to my uncle. I hoped that Mr. Fitzgerald, as he would unavoidably see my note, might, either from generosity or resentment, terminate the negotiation.

But I was not long permitted to meditate on present or distant evil. An event was at hand which subdued all my fortitude, and made me an unresisting victim of the fate that awaited me. Scarcely an hour had elapsed after the departure of my note, before I was called to my uncle's study, to behold him under the influence of an apoplectic seizure,

which threatened his life. Mr. Fitzgerald was with him, and on seeing me enter, approached me with an alarmed expression of countenance, and said—‘Alas, Miss Mulgrave, I fear your note has killed your uncle.’

As he observed the shock he had inflicted, he added, in a deprecating tone—‘Do not take me literally. The bishop’s malady is constitutional; and, most likely, could not have been averted.’

I reflected on this remark afterwards, as indicative of good-nature, at least.

The valets, under the direction of two medical men, were removing my uncle to his bed-room. He appeared quite insensible, and was an affecting spectacle of impotence, sufficient to move any beholder. He had formerly recovered from a similar attack, but it was far less serious than this. As for me, fearing that by my note I had been the cause of it, I followed the attendants to the bed-room door, in speechless, unutterable agony. Never until now had I known remorse—that feeling which fastens on the heart like ‘the worm that never dieth.’ What was the deepest or the tenderest grief compared with this? It was but as the cry or tear of infancy. Until we know guilt—until we are placed in affinity with crime, we can never be said to have drunk the cup of human misery to the dregs. What was even the wretchedness of a marriage with Fitzgerald, compared with the guilt of

having destroyed a human life? All my estimates of right and wrong seemed at once changed. That which only a few hours ago had appeared to me but a duty to myself—but a simple effort of self-preservation—now assumed the character of rebellion against paternal authority, and the coercive benevolence of a father. These distracting reflections disturbed my reason, as I sat in a distant corner of my uncle's chamber, watching the slow processes of remedial treatment.

For some time my uncle had been getting worse, and a temporary suspension of experiments had left him alone in bed, while the doctors retired for further consultation to an adjoining room. My uncle's personal servant sat outside the door of his chamber.

A solemn quiet pervaded it. Overpowered by what I beheld, and fearing that all hope had been abandoned, I crept softly to the bedside of my uncle, in a state little short of aberration, and kneeling down beside him, took one of his cold, unconscious hands, and vowed solemnly on it, in an emphatic whisper, that if it might please God to restore him, and bring him back again to consciousness, I would comply with all his requirements, to the very letter, and marry whom he pleased. Having said this, I finished solemnly with the words — 'So help me God!' and kissed my uncle's hand.

Fitzgerald, who was sitting quite out of sight,



behind one of the bed-curtains, suddenly, but, silently, came forward, and kneeling down by my side, took my uncle's hand out of mine, and in a distinct whisper said—'I also vow, on this hand, to perform every wish of its venerable owner, and marry whom he may direct.'

This most unforeseen incident might have been a severe trial to the sincerity of my vow; but my heart was so emptied of every feeling, except the desire of my uncle's restoration to life, that the occurrence scarcely moved me. Neither did I hasten to rise from the posture in which my vow had been made, but burying my face in the bed clothes, addressed myself to silent prayer. I know not how long I remained thus. My heart at last felt relieved of part of its load, and the dying hand I was holding in mine had become warm. All at once I felt one of its fingers twitch. The movement acted on me like an electric shock. I sprang up, and beckoning the doctors to approach, whispered what had occurred. They made no reply, but beginning to examine the person of the patient, I retreated to my own rooms. In a few hours I was apprized, by a message from them, that the circulation was returning gradually over the whole frame, and that there was hope of even more decisive symptoms of improvement in a short time.

My thankfulness on receipt of this message, and my joy when, two hours after, a return to conscious-

ness was announced, was as unbounded as my distress had been. No criminal in a court of justice, unexpectedly hearing from a jury the sentence of 'not guilty,' was ever relieved of a heavier load.

The wrong we do ourselves, however, has its own peculiar guilt and consequences; and is seldom expiated, but in that crucible which, while it purifies, destroys.

In the course of a week, my uncle had regained his customary health. I had seen very little of Fitzgerald since the scene in the sick chamber; but a former impression of his good nature had been confirmed by several incidents in the progress of my uncle's convalescence. Yet my repugnance to marrying him was scarcely less than it had been originally.

I soon, however, became sensible that I had forged fetters for myself, which would be rivetted with a rigour and promptitude exceeding my worst fears. My uncle was, indeed, in high good humour; and he endeavoured to expedite the marriage, with an urgency that must have been revolting to both parties. Whenever I was more than usually sad, he would exhort me to 'cheer up, for the happy day would soon arrive.'

On one occasion, when he was lacerating me with such anticipations, I could not restrain my tears, and remarked to him, that although my vow on his account, having been made to God, must, if he held

me to it, be fulfilled, it was yet in *his* power to save me from the consequences of the rashness of which I had been guilty, and which I had committed only under the influence of irrepressible terror at the thought of losing him. It was in vain I thus disclosed to him the state of my feelings. I appealed to his compassion, to his generosity, to the paternal relation in which he stood to me. My uncle was inexorable in demanding 'the bond!' Had the 'pound of flesh' been included in it, he would doubtless have been equally inflexible, and thus exhibited the type of a new Shylock in sacerdotal garb. One expedient yet remained. I had never appealed to Mr. Fitzgerald himself on a *religious* ground, but I now thought it possible that I might obtain from him a resignation of me on this account. I therefore took an opportunity of stating to him that both in opinion and feeling, I was what he must consider a heretic. And placing before him, not only the inconveniences, but the mutual bitternesses, that must arise from discordancy on so material a point as that of religion, I begged him to consider before it was too late, the fact of which I had informed him, in which I had no doubt he would find sufficient reason for resigning me, or at any rate for deferring indefinitely the contemplated solemn engagement.

As I ceased speaking, he burst into a hearty laugh, exclaiming, 'Really, my dear Miss Mulgrave, as it is the first time you have ever condescended to ask a favour of me, I am immensely miserable at not being

able to grant your request. But much as you fancy you would oblige yourself by jilting me, I am not sure you could live without me ; and the sacrifice you demand, would certainly plunge *me* into a premature grave ; and you would then, most assuredly, be offering up your own dear little life to restore mine. Besides, I have not the smallest objection to your *Huguenotism*. You may make a conventicle of Beech Park, and have your own chaplain resident in it (provided he is a venerable man), so that you will allow me a quiet seat in some chimney corner there, whence I may peep at you, and hear the music of your voice occasionally. Pray withdraw your motion, or positively I must betray your confidence, and tell the bishop of it ; for I am sure he has no notion of so serious a peccadillo, in one whom he deems perfect in every accomplishment except common sense. He sadly deplores your want of that ; and since it makes you blind to my merits, I ought to deplore it too, if I could convince myself that you really lacked it. But I do myself the justice to believe that this want of common sense would never have caused the smallest objection to me, if I had not been forced on you by authority. You will forget that, before we have been married a year, and will then dote on me, as all the rest of your sex do. Pray don't look so grave—surely, truth cannot be distasteful to you, and I repeat, that the women everywhere worship me !'

During this extraordinary effusion, I regarded his

countenance with attention, and discerned the same symptoms I had observed more than once before. I could not be mistaken. It was, alas! an artificial exhilaration, almost amounting to inebriety. Must I close my eyes to such a trait as this in the character of the man destined to be my husband? Oh, how my heart sickened at the thought!

It was impossible for two persons to be more unsuitable to each other than Mr. Fitzgerald and myself. I made the remark to him more than once, in the hope of inducing him to reflect on the fact. But he held fast to his purpose, as though his life or his fortune would be staked by its abandonment; treating me as a child that might be amused or conciliated by petting and adulation. With what motives my uncle plied him, I know not. The natural inconstancy of his tastes and pursuits would have been sufficient, under ordinary influences, to have worn out his *penchant* for me in a far shorter time than the six weeks he had already devoted to it. But my uncle, as a third party, who had gratuitously charged himself with my destiny, was the more inexplicable person of the two. I could not but suppose him solicitous for my welfare and happiness; yet whence his utter disregard of my own inclinations? His error seemed to lie in the ideas that marriage was essential to happiness, and wealth and station essential to marriage. Fatal errors! sweeping through the land, and every day making victims of the inexperienced and the thoughtless in all ranks of life.

My dear father had been dead but four months, and my brother a still shorter time; but the wedding day, which had been fixed without consulting me, obliged me to exchange deep mourning for bridal attire. What of this? No outrage of feeling could be worth a thought, compared with that of extorting marriage vows from an unattached and repugnant heart. 'At least, dear uncle,' said I, 'permit me, for the sake of the dead, to retain a slight mourning, and let the ceremony be private.'

'I will have no private doings,' said he. 'I am marrying you to a man whom all his county and connexions delight to honour; and my niece shall neither disgrace me nor herself by her caprice, or her sentimentality on this occasion.'

At length the dreaded morning came. When I found myself a conspicuous object amongst the gay and smiling guests of my uncle's drawing-rooms, it was with difficulty I retained my senses. I neither recognised faces nor remembered names, and I heard not the compliments addressed to me. I was an automaton, whose machinery was deranged; or a galvanised corpse, with eyes that saw not, and ears that heard not. Yet, in spite of this incapacity, I was invested with a part in the drama of the hour, that bound me for life to a man with whom I had as yet never been able to reciprocate a feeling, or exchange a thought.

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[illegible]

...I will have to go to the ...  
...the ...  
...the ...  
...the ...  
...the ...

At length the devoted nursing nurse. When I  
found myself a convalescent slight amongst the rest  
and waiting upon all my needs. I suffered  
with difficulty I obtained my nurse. I suffered  
recognized from our convalescent nurse, and I found  
not the comforts allowed to me. I was an  
intruder, whose customary was thought, as a  
planned nurse, with eyes that saw not and ears  
that heard not. That is why of this sympathy, I  
was moved with a gift in the hands of the nurse,  
that found me the difference was with others I had to  
yet were less able to sympathize as feeling, as to  
change a thought.



I have already said that I conceived a prejudice against Fitzgerald at first sight, and I was never able to conquer it. There was that in him which offended my taste. I was naturally sensitive, perhaps scrupulous; and having erected a standard of excellence in my own mind, I was quick in detecting any deviation from it. I discerned not the egotism and the arrogance which thus required that another should conform himself to my views, and modify himself by my wishes; and while I was aiming at faultlessness in my own conduct, as the only means of happiness left to me as a wife, I forgot that the greatest of all human excellences is charity to the faults of others. I had not learnt that the exercise of forbearance and indulgence towards those with whom we live is a remedy of almost unerring efficacy, not only in curing foibles, but in regenerating principles. Had I known this when first I became a wife, perhaps I might have escaped some of my subsequent miseries.

My husband was an only child—impetuous and self-willed, undisciplined and lawless. In seeking me for a wife, he must have been influenced by public taste, and the ambition of marrying the daughter of a man so universally popular and beloved as my father. He required neither intellect nor principle, and would no doubt have been better satisfied had he found me without either. But there can be no excuse for a woman of principle, if

she do not make an infinitely better wife, as well as a more indulgent one, than a woman of negative qualities.

We never had any domestic feuds, but my husband's impetuosity at first intimidated, and afterwards revolted me. His wild caprices and irregular habits precluded any system in our mode of life; and while he professed a passionate attachment to me, he seemed often to forget that I was in existence. Nevertheless, had I been simply indifferent to him, had I not been coerced into marriage with him, that gratitude for attachment which is so natural to the female heart, might possibly have obtained for him some return of affection.

The great advantage of marrying from attachment is, that it prevents that critical analysis of conduct and character which is so liable to terminate in dissatisfaction and alienation. When we love, we unconsciously invest the objects of our love with virtues of our own creation, believing them to be theirs; while they, viewing themselves through the colouring of our imaginations, grateful and surprised at our discoveries, become eventually what we had only fancied them to be. It is thus that love regenerates the heart, and elevates the character of its object.

I had not the advantage of this potent ally. Clear-sighted to my husband's faults and vices, I became hopeless of his reform. Perhaps he discerned this hopelessness, and abandoned himself to

his evil courses. Nevertheless, it was neither neglect of duty, nor the omission of conciliation, on my part, that rendered us unhappy; but it was that *vice and misery are in their very nature inseparable*. And how blind soever a wife may wish to be, or may fancy it her duty to be, to vices for which she is not responsible, there are kinds and amounts of *wrong* with which she can make no compromise but at the peril of everything that is sacred in feeling and in conscience. Nor had I been formed, either by precept or example, for that temporizing morality required in the wife of a man devoted to self-gratification, and regardless of all claims but those of inclination. My husband was naturally fond of convivial pleasures, and, from the earliest period of our marriage, surrounded himself with congenial companions.

He was also fond of music, and, possessing an exquisite voice, as well as science and taste, his popularity in such society was unbounded.

This popularity increased, and perpetuated the illusions of his mind, fostering his errors until they became inveterate and incurable. The solitariness of our mansion did not insure retirement, for whenever Fitzgerald was at home, it was filled with visitors, so that we were scarcely ever left a single day alone in the society of each other.

Fond of the sports of the field, my husband was frequently absent for weeks together; and whilst, in

the acquirement of essential knowledge, I endeavoured to find a remedy against loneliness of heart, I but widened, by the exercise of my faculties, the distance betwixt him and myself.

Conviviality naturally led to inebriety, and he was sometimes brought home by his servants from an entertainment, at four or five in the morning, in a condition degrading to human nature. In his two latter years this became a frequent and almost a perpetual occurrence.

We lived on for some time in a course of this sort, interrupted only by those occasional indispositions which the excesses of the table produced, and which kept him a short time at home a patient of mine.

On these occasions it frequently happened that a transient gleam of goodness would break out in his character, and a temporary relish of home produce almost a transforming effect on his manners.

But that consciousness of error which never leads to reformation, debases the mind, and even gives an impetus to its downward course.

My husband had no sooner recovered his strength and spirits, than he again left home in quest of new excitements.

Meantime, a derangement in his pecuniary affairs occurred, and the customary advances for the current expenses of the house became deeply in arrear.

I had learnt, from the misfortunes of my dear father, the perilousness of long-standing accounts,

and had therefore, from the first, on assuming my domestic duties at Beech Park, been rigid in requiring of my housekeeper punctually to settle all her accounts every three months. I had never been restricted in my domestic expenditure, except by my own discretion, and now, becoming apprehensive that we might be living on too great a scale of expense for my husband's revenues, I one day proposed to him, with great deference, that I might be allowed to make some retrenchments.

He impatiently replied that there was no occasion for so paltry an expedient, and expressed his displeasure at my supposing that the arrears in the customary advances were anything more than a temporary irregularity. It nevertheless continued until I was driven to the greatest imaginable straits for the smallest amounts of cash.

My housekeeper beseechingly offered me loans, for it was impossible to conceal from her that I was without funds; but of course I never allowed myself to accept her assistance; and we continued to live for some time on that unbounded credit which my husband's known wealth and our former habits of punctual and periodical payments had obtained for us, both in town and country.

Nevertheless, the day of reckoning came at last. Fitzgerald's health grew worse and worse; but this did not wean him from his excesses, and he continued to accumulate debts of honour at the gaming-table,

until a ruined reputation caused his expulsion from the circles in which he had hitherto moved, and forced him on the resources of home for society.

I saw at once that he was in a state of alarming decline, both in health and spirits. It was evidently as much too late to repair his health, as it eventually proved to be to retrieve his social position and character.

All I could do for him was to nurse him with incessant care. He awoke to the charm of domestic affections, when he had no longer strength to endure the interesting society and caresses of his children; and very soon became so ill as to be confined, by the doctor's orders, to his bed.

There were some two or three Romish priests, one of whom was a distinguished Jesuit, living in the vicinity of Beech Park, who at this juncture first began to come about the house, with pretexts of various kinds for obtaining access to the sick man's chamber. I was in great anxiety respecting his religious state, and not knowing what might be passing in his mind, I thought it right to apprise him of the urgency of the priests to obtain an interview with him.

But Fitzgerald had always held the priesthood of his church in abhorrence, and had never, from the time of our marriage, complied with any religious requirements.

No confessions—no penances—and I may add, no prayers; for, revolted as he declared himself to be

by what he deemed the hypocrisy of his church, he would have no communion with it, although he made no effort openly to renounce its doctrines or contend with its practices.

One day, as he lay on his sick bed, he deplored, in strong and affecting language, the dubious position in which he stood with a power so formidable as that of a popish priest armed with the authority of his church.

I inquired why he did not emancipate himself, from bonds which were so oppressive, and so abhorrent to him.

‘You know not,’ he replied, ‘what you advise. A real emancipation is impossible, where the powers of that church are protected by law. Its *spiritual* powers, as they are called—only to blind those who discern not their true character—are neither more nor less than a secular and social despotism, which, in concert with that serpent-like influence which the priests assume and obtain over the minds of all who lend to them a listening ear, becomes a leviathan with which it is impossible to contend, without becoming its victim.

‘What is life—what is property—in the hands of the priest? They dissolve under his very touch, and pass away, none knowing how or whither. I lie here, bereft of all my illusions, and like Don Quixotte, I expire with them. The priests! Oh, had I but health, or even the strength of a child, I might protect you and my children from their grasp;

for be assured you will fall into it. I see you, both in my waking and my sleeping dreams, led away to the niche in the wall, or to the private cell of the Inquisition,\* where the stake is always fixed, and awaiting its victims !’

I fancied that he was slightly delirious, as he often was, but he continued—‘ Oh, my pure and angelic wife ! my beautiful children ! is it I who have sold you to the destroyer ?’

These expressions suggested the idea of his having already been drawn into some engagement with the priests ; but I was far from suspecting that he had been irrevocably tampered with by them ; although, as yet, not any of them had been admitted to an interview with him, so far as I knew. But this was not necessary to the attainment of their objects, since any one of the medical attendants belonging to the *holy church* was ready to do their bidding, and perform for the priest, by proxy, what he could not perform in person, till the dupe was moulded to his purpose. As for myself, I was but an *outlaw* in their estimation, who might be dealt with as best suited their policy.

As Fitzgerald sank into silence, I seated myself by his bedside, and spoke to him quietly of that invisible future from which none of us could escape, whether prepared for it or not ; and begged him if there was any desire in his heart to consult a spiritual adviser, that he would allow me to call in some clerical man

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\* Note 8.



of exemplary piety, to whom he might unbosom himself.

I should have been rejoiced had he requested me to bring a Protestant minister to him ; but I did not propose it, as I feared that his faculties were too much disordered to admit of his being initiated in the faith of the gospel, unless aided by the forms and phraseology (to which he had been accustomed in early life) of his own church. Could he have been brought to 'repentance towards God,' and faith in the atoning Saviour, I would have been well satisfied that this great work should have been effected even by the agency of the Romish church. I therefore left it to himself to suggest what his own mind dictated.

After listening attentively to my remarks for at least a minute or two, he earnestly fixed his eyes on me, saying: 'Helen, you really think the soul valuable, do you? How much do you suppose it to be worth?'

'Oh! more than a world. No earthly good can be put in competition with it.'

'Suppose then,' he replied, 'it were necessary, in order to buy my soul out of purgatory, to bestow my estates, and all I have in the world, on the church, regardless of any provision for my children or yourself—would you consent to such a sacrifice? Is my soul of sufficient value in your eyes to enable you to acquiesce in the requirements of the church?'

'If,' I replied, 'the price you propose could indeed

purchase the salvation of your soul, it would be my most sacred duty to suffer cheerfully the loss of every earthly possession for such an object, not counting the cost to myself or our children. But the soul is not redeemed with 'corruptible things, such as silver and gold.' All the wealth of the world would be inadequate to the purchase. The precious blood of Christ has been already shed for the redemption of it, and there is now 'no more sacrifice for sin.' What is required of us is, to repent and believe; and without this, even the divine atonement will have been made in vain for us.'

'You are an excellent casuist, Helen,' said Fitzgerald. 'You ought to have been a priest yourself. But do not attempt to speak again to me on the awful subject you have chosen for a theme. Hush! There are footsteps. Oh, how quickened is my hearing to the tread of a priest!'

I started as the door opened, to see, indeed, a priest enter. My doomed husband became frantic at sight of him, and after successive execrations and screams, fainted.

The Jesuit measured me with his eye, as my husband lay before me in a state of insensibility, from which I vainly endeavoured to recover him. It was a relief to me to see the doctors enter at this moment.

I remained until Fitzgerald returned to consciousness, and was then requested by him, in a whisper, to withdraw.

I was greatly surprised at what I had witnessed, and still more at my husband's request ; but entreating him to be calm, I quitted the room, with an apprehensiveness which I had never before felt on leaving him. The sudden appearance of the priest in the sick chamber, and his extraordinary reception there, I could in no way understand.

Inquiring of my servants how the Jesuit gained admittance, I was informed that he had asked for Mr. Fitzgerald, and desired the servant to conduct him to his presence, with an air of confidence which induced him to suppose that he had come by appointment, and in this way made good his entrance, the doctors shortly following him.

Having received this information, I returned to the anti-chamber of the sick room, hovering about the locked door of it, without being able to enter, for nearly an hour. Distrusting the object of the priest, whose presence, at any rate, I knew to be offensive to the suffering patient, I one moment felt disposed to assemble my servants, and make my way into his room by force ; but the recollection that he himself had requested me to retire from it, checked my purpose, and compelled me to restrain my indignation.

Every time I attempted to enter, I was prevented from doing so by one of the doctors coming to the door, and telling me that the patient was engaged with his confessor.

For a short time I heard only an occasional murmur of voices, but suddenly Fitzgerald's tones became so loud as to rise to the height of violent anger or delirium.

My knocks at the door were now unnoticed. At length a loud scream reached me, followed by a violent ringing of the bell. The valet appeared instantly, and passed, by the priest's order, at once into the room. The door of it had now been thrown open by the Jesuit priest, and he stood in the gap, to prevent my entrance, with a *serious placid* face.

'Madam,' said he, in a gentle, touching voice; 'the duties of the confessional are painful, both to the confessor and the confessed. But I trust that I have been able to pour balm into the diseased mind, and to enlighten the dark 'valley of the shadow of death,' to the traveller destined so soon to pass through it.'

Unable to listen longer to him, I motioned him aside, by an impatient gesture, and rushed past him to the bedside of my husband, to behold him extended lifeless in a pool of blood.

Horrified at the sight, I involuntarily screamed, and unable to speak, pointed to the corpse that lay before me, and turning to one of the doctors with a look of inquiry, he replied to me by saying—'The excitement of the patient's feelings, when in confession, was so great as to cause the rupture of a material blood-vessel in the chest. You see the sad

consequences. But we have examined him, and find that there still is life, and we trust that he may be recovered to consciousness. Meanwhile, allow me to entreat you, madam, to spare yourself the pain of beholding him in his present state. We have rung for the nurse, who will doubtless be here in an instant, when remedial measures will be tried for his recovery; and you will, I trust, if you will leave him to our care, shortly see him restored to you.'

I did not, however, leave the room, for suspicions of a terrific character had taken possession of me. The Jesuit disappeared while I was speaking to the doctors, under the influence, as they afterwards told me, of sudden indisposition.

As the hæmorrhage had for the present subsided, the nurse and the valet were able to perform their functions effectually, under the direction of the doctors, who soon left the patient entirely to their care.

I watched over him a long time in utter hopelessness although his breathing was still perceptible. The one or the other of the doctors came every hour during the day to inquire into his progress. As midnight approached, and there was nothing to be done in the sick room, I dismissed the nurse to an adjoining chamber for rest, while the doctor retired to another.

During the night the patient slept too soundly, and alarmed me by the depth of his respiration; but very soon awaking, he fixed his eyes on me with a

look indicating consciousness, but also deep despair. He motioned me to stoop my ear to his mouth. I did so, while in a whispered articulation, he said :— ‘Helen, my good, my excellent wife ! But I cannot talk. You will, I fear, at first, be entirely without money ; go to my desk, the key is yonder in my waistcoat pocket. You will find a purse in the desk embroidered and tasselled with jewels, it is full of gold, secure it. I will not offend your purity by telling you for whom it was originally designed.

‘May God forgive me this, and all my other innumerable sins !’

‘Amen !’ I exclaimed, as I knelt by him.

He ceased speaking, and lay an hour without movement, and then began to speak again in the same low indistinct whisper.

‘Helen,’ he said, ‘they wanted me to sign away your right over our boy, and the whole of the property. All, all, they wanted, to atone for what they called the unpardonable sin of my having sanctioned your secession from the church. They forced the pen into my hand, which they wanted to guide, but I resisted—yes, effectually ; but the violence of my resistance produced the hæmorrhage.’

He then sank into silence for about half an hour, when I again perceived his lips moving. ‘You,’ he said, ‘my pure, my faithful wife, they called a heretic and an outlaw. But I did not sign, neither did I *confess* to the Jesuit.’

‘Were you not then in confession with him,’ I asked, ‘when I was refused admittance to you?’

‘No, no; he shall never bring me to that. But, oh, Helen, in his rage, he cursed me in the name of the Holy Trinity!\* I am lost—lost for ever!’

As he said this, he fainted. I administered a cordial medicine, he again revived, and shortly after fell asleep.

Within an hour of daybreak, he awoke in a paroxysm of weakness and terror, that touched me to the very soul. ‘I am dying,’ said he, ‘oh Helen, send for a priest, and give me the last sacraments!’

I inquired whom I should send for; he mentioned the village priest, a harmless man, who was not long in arriving with an assistant priest, who accompanied him.

As they entered the room, bearing the host, I perceived by the dim lamp light which pervaded it, that the features of the accompanying priest were hidden by a black hood. His figure was bent like that of an aged man, and as I thought him a stranger to me, I took no further notice of him.

They both approached the sufferer, and I, softly pressing the hand of my husband, to indicate to him that I was retiring, withdrew to an adjoining room, to supplicate in silence for the departing spirit.

In about an hour the chamber door opened, and

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\* Note 9.

as appeared before it, the village priest beckoned me to enter.

The glazed eyes of Fitzgerald, who was evidently in the last agony, were fixed upon the crucifix which was held before him by the priest.

As I approached to take his hand, his eye wandered to my face, and rested there. Suddenly, an expression and movement of the most frantic agony distorted his features—he raised himself up, with a cry of piercing distress, and fell back, lifeless !

The assistant priest, who had been bending over him, now stood erect by the bedside, with his hood thrown back, and as I casually glanced at him, I encountered the fixed gaze of the ‘placid’ Jesuit.

The deplorable manner of my husband’s death, evidently accelerated by that priestly power he had so earnestly deprecated, shook me fearfully. I could not escape from the terror of his last look, and the wild shriek that accompanied it, except to follow the departed spirit to that world in which the illusions of time are exchanged for the realities of eternity !

The solemn mockery of that mystic cross on which the sins of the world were once expiated, as exhibited in ivory miniature to the sightless eye of death, contributed to the horrors of retrospection, and caused me to deplore the facility with which I



had yielded to the command of my husband to 'leave him with the priests.' I now reproached myself bitterly for having ever left him with them. But it was too late for regret, and tears were unavailing.

## NOTES.

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NOTE 1, PAGE 12.—‘*That book was the Bible.*’

### THE BIBLE.

Within this awful volume lies  
The mystery of mysteries ;  
Happiest they of human race,  
To whom their God has given grace  
To read, to fear, to hope, to pray,  
To lift the latch, to force the way ;  
And better had they ne’er been born,  
Than read to doubt, or read to scorn.

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

It has often been an anxious question in the minds of some, even orthodox Christians, amongst the laity, as to how the sacred books of the Old Testament were preserved and brought down to the Christian era ; as well as how those of the New Testament were subsequently collected and combined, so as to complete its own canon.

The following extracts from the works of two of our most undoubted authorities on these points, though much abridged and unavoidably condensed, are nevertheless faithfully given, as far as they go. The reader who inquires further, will find abundant information in the volumes whence the extracts have been drawn.

‘Previously to the building of Solomon’s Temple, A.M. 3001, the Pentateuch was deposited in the side of the ark of the covenant, to be consulted by the Israelites.\*

‘After the erection of that sacred edifice, it was deposited

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\* *Deuteronomy*, xxi. 26.

in the Treasury, together with all the succeeding productions of the inspired writers. This temple was burnt by the Chaldeans under Nebuchadnezzar, A.M. 3416, or B.C. 584.

‘On the rebuilding of the second Temple by Zerubbabel, in the sixth year of Darius, B.C. 160, the Jewish worship was fully re-established, ‘according as it is written in the law of Moses.’\*

‘With regard to the entire Hebrew Bible. About fifty years after the rebuilding of the second Temple, B.C. 110, and the consequent establishment of the Jewish religion, it is generally admitted that *the canon of the Old Testament was settled.*’†

#### THE NEW TESTAMENT.

‘As to the time when, and the persons by whom, the books of the New Testament were collected into one volume, there are various opinions, or rather conjectures, of the learned. It must suffice to know that before the middle of the second century of the Christian era, most of the books composing the New Testament were in every Christian church throughout the known world, *and were read and regarded as the Divine rule of faith and practice.* Hence it may be concluded, that it was while some of the apostles were still living, and certainly while their disciples and immediate successors were everywhere to be met with, that these books were separated and distinguished from all human compositions. That the four Gospels were combined during the lifetime of the apostle John, and that the first three Gospels received the approbation of this inspired man, we learn expressly from the testimony of Eusebius!’‡

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\* *Ezra*, chap. vi., v. 18.

† Horne's *Introduction to the Study of the Holy Scriptures*, vol. ii., part 1, chap. 2, p. 237.

‡ Mosheim's *Ecclesiastical Hist.*, Cent. 1st., Part II., chap. ii., p. 86.

It would appear, from ecclesiastical history, that the Romish church, from the very beginning of its apostasy from the purity and simplicity of the religion of Christ, endeavoured to keep the laity in ignorance, not only of the Scriptures, but as much as possible of every other species of knowledge. 'Ignorance,' as 'the mother of devotion,' would seem to have been one of the great principles, on which the policy of the church was framed. Even 'Gregory the Great, who sent the first Romish missionary (Saint Augustine) to England, in the year 597, ordered that the Britons should have no schools, except monasteries, for fear of heresies.'\*

The priesthood, though not prohibited the use of the Bible,† were not benefited by the exemption. In the seventh century their ignorance was so great, that 'the bishops were many of them unable to compose their own discourses, and but few priests could read or write.' Similar ignorance was exhibited at a later period. 'When Luther was ordered to appear before the pope's legate (Cardinal Thomas Cajetan), then at the Dief of Augsburg, there to defend his doctrines and conduct, Luther would admit of none but Scriptural proofs; and the cardinal, who was no biblical scholar, could not produce such proofs.

'Even in the University of Paris, which was considered the mother and queen of all the rest, not a man could be found, when Luther arose, competent to dispute with him out of the Scriptures. This was not strange. Many of the doctors of theology in those times had never read the

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\* Bennet's *Memorial of the Reformation*. 1717.

† Pius IV. did authorise certain rules for prohibition and permission of books; in which it is permitted to bishops to grant a faculty of reading the Scriptures translated; but to this rule there is added an observation, that 'this power was taken from bishops by command of the Roman universal Inquisition.'—*A Treatise on the Pope's Supremacy*, by Isaac Barrow, D.D.

Bible.\* Carlstadt expressly tells us this was the case with himself. Whenever one freely read the Bible, he was cried out against, as one making innovations, a heretic, and as exposing Christianity to great danger by making the New Testament known.†

With regard to the prohibition of the Bible by the Romish church, it does not appear that any interdiction of it, by authority, took place until that of the Council of Toulouse, in the thirteenth century. That council expressly forbade the laity to have the books either of the Old or New Testament.‡

After this prohibition, the lapse of a century or two brings us to the revival of letters in Europe, when the eagerness for information was so great and so universal, that although the first rush to obtain it was permitted to take its course, the watchful eye of Rome soon discovered the consequences that must arise to the church, from the diffusion of knowledge. ‘Pope Paul II., in order to affix a stigma on the acquisition of it, used to call scholars *heretics*; and an academy in his time, of which Pomponius Laetus was the head, and Platina one of the members, excited the apprehensions of Paul so much, as to induce him to have all the members of the academy arrested. Not content with their imprisonment, they were tortured by his orders, and one of them expired under his sufferings. Paul at length declared that any person who should so much as

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\* ‘It often happeneth that the pope is not well skilled in divinity, as pope Innocent X. was wont to profess concerning himself, (to waive discourse about theological points;) he therefore cannot pronounce in use of ordinary means, but only by miracle, as Balaam’s ass. So pope Innocent X. said, that the vicar of Jesus Christ was not obliged to examine all things by dispute, for that the truth of his decrees depended only on divine inspiration.’—Barrow’s *Treatise of the Pope’s Supremacy*.

† Mosheim’s *Ecclesiastical Hist.*

‡ Dupin.

*name* the academy, either in jest or in earnest, should be considered a heretic.\*

Meanwhile, the art of printing was preparing a future little looked for, in the aid which it subsequently lent to the glorious Reformation, that began in the early part of the sixteenth century. 'In England, as in other parts of Europe, the spread of the pure doctrines of the Reformation was accompanied with new translations into the vernacular language. For the first *printed* English translation of the Scriptures, we are indebted to William Tindal, who, having formed the design of translating the New Testament from the original Greek into English, removed to Antwerp, in Flanders, for this purpose. Here, with the assistance of the learned John Fry (or Fryth), who was burnt on a charge of *heresy* in Smithfield in 1552, and a friar called William Roye, who suffered death on the same account in Portugal, he finished it; and in the year 1526 it was printed, either at Antwerp or Hamburgh, without a name, in a middle-sized octavo volume.†

'This copy, on its arrival in England, was forbidden by Cardinal Wolsey; and, soon after, the whole impression was bought up by Tonsal, bishop of London, and Sir Thomas More, and burnt at St. Paul's Cross. About the year 1530, Tindal reprinted the New Testament, with part of the Old; copies of which, being sent over into England, were dispersed by his brother, John Tindal, and Thomas Patmore, merchant, who for this offence were tried in the Star Chamber, and condemned to ride with their faces to the horse tail, having papers on their heads, and Testaments stuck to their gowns, which they themselves were to throw into a fire made for that purpose, and then to be fined at the king's pleasure. They were fined eighteen

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\* Sismondi.

† Horne's *Introduction to the Study of the Holy Scriptures*.

thousand four hundred and forty pounds, ten shillings, and tenpence.\*

‘Upon Tindal’s return to Antwerp in 1534, Henry VIII. and his council contrived means to have him seized and imprisoned. After a confinement of about a year and a half, he was condemned to death by the emperor’s decree, in an assembly at Augsburg; and in 1536 he was strangled at Villefort, near Brussels, the place of his imprisonment; after which his body was burnt.’†

Such was the treatment which the first translator of the Scriptures into English received at the hands of Henry VIII.; who, swayed by popish counsels long after he had meditated to throw off the papal yoke, was one day a Protestant and the next a Papist. Notwithstanding this, through the interest of Cromwell, the vicar-general, with the king, the Bible was again printed; and the king, by proclamation, ordered that it should be provided in every parish.

‘Shortly before the middle of this (sixteenth) century, and during the progress of the Reformation, a bull was issued by Pope Paul III. summoning the European princes and prelates to meet at Trent. Several sessions were held of the council thus convened; and after the third, it was agreed that *Scripture and Tradition* should be taken into consideration. This celebrated council, after their deliberation, decreed that the Gospel should in future be considered as composed of written books and unwritten traditions, —the members of this assembly thus proclaiming an equal reverence and veneration for the traditions, as for the inspired books of the Old and New Testament. Bertani, one of their council, contended against this decree, as did also the Bishop of Chiozza, who asserted that to equalize the authority of Scripture and tradition was impious. But

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\* Bennet’s *Memorial of the Reformation*. 1715.

† Horne.

this opposition was unavailing; the decree was carried in the face of it."\*

In conformity with the decree of the Council of Toulouse, which prohibited the Bible three centuries before, the Council of Trent, also, now issued a similar decree, making the possession of a Bible by the laity a penal offence; ordaining that 'whosoever shall presume to read these Bibles, or have them in possession, without a faculty from the bishop or inquisitor, shall not be capable of receiving absolution of their sins, unless they first give up their Bibles to the ordinary.'†

Lest any reader of the foregoing extracts from past history be disposed to consider the features they present of Romanism either as obsolete or effaced by the lapse of centuries, the collator annexes a few *modern* instances of the prohibition of the Bible; in which the infallible and unchanging church of Rome, in the nineteenth century, appears not a whit behind ancient popery, either in its base estimate of the sacred volume, or in its persecution of those who avow their belief in its divine origin.

In 1824, Pope Leo XII., in an encyclical letter, declared that to translate the Holy Scriptures into the vulgar tongue of every nation, was a plague, a most wicked novelty, noxious to both faith and morals; and all bishops and clergy are enjoined 'to turn away their flocks, by all means, from these poisonous pastures.'

In harmony with this, the *present* pope, Pius IX., in an encyclical letter, dated December 8th, 1849, denounces, as one of the principal of the many snares laid for the people by the most subtle enemies of the church and of human society, (the circulation of) Bibles translated into the vulgar tongue. 'With vigilance and solicitude' the clergy are enjoined to labour 'that the faithful may fly with horror from these *poisonous pastures*.'

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\* Conc. Tridentii, Sessio IV.

† Concil. Trid. de libris prohibitis.



A recent traveller could only find, in Rome itself, two copies of the Bible, which, being in twenty-four volumes, and at a cost equal to four pounds sterling, was of course attainable only by the wealthy.\*

‘In 1849, when the present pope was at Gaeta, several thousand copies of the New Testament were distributed in Rome. No sooner had he returned, than commissioners were sent into every house to search for Bibles, and where ever a copy was found concealed, the owner of the house was fined, and in some instances imprisoned. Three thousand six hundred and forty-two copies of the Italian New Testament, which had been just printed off, when the French entered Rome, were seized by the papal government, and ordered to be burnt.’†

The following extract from a work entitled ‘Brittany and the Bible,’ appeared in the ‘Times’ of October 23rd, 1852:—

‘Romanists point with *pride* to Brittany, but it should be with *shame*. Until 1828, so tenderly and providently had the Romish church acted towards the Bretons, that they possessed no Bible whatever. In other words, Brittany, before 1828, was in the same Scriptural darkness as was Germany before Luther, in 1528. In 1828, the darkness was first broken by the translation of the Bible into Breton; not, however, by the Romish church, but by the English Bible Society. Had the matter been left to the Romish church, Brittany would still have wanted the Word of God. But, thanks to Providence, other instruments were put into action; and up to the present time, though the great mass of the people have never heard of the book, yet some thousands of copies have been distributed. Still, the ignorance of the Bible is beyond belief. \* \*

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\* Seymour’s *Mornings among the Jesuits*.

† Hon. and Rev. S. Waldegrave, in a speech on behalf of the British and Foreign Bible Society, 9th June, 1851.

'No other than the religion of *darkness* and *ignorance* can be proud of Brittany, and as such, it may have a pride in its own work. Brittany has been for ages a fief of the Romish church, the very focus of French Romanism; and thence has arisen its present state of crime, poverty, ignorance, and superstition. Perhaps the people have a certain tendency (thereto), but the priests have eagerly encouraged it; and thus, by cause and effect mutually acting and reacting, has arrived the climax: for the centre of Brittany (the department of Finisterre) has the sad singularity of being the only department in all France where the Bible, in their own tongue, is totally forbidden, by law and practice, to the people.

'It is wholly forbidden by the government, and their will is strictly carried out by their officials; and neither by gift, sale, loan, nor otherwise, can you dispose of a single copy of the Breton Bible in all Finisterre, but under pain of fine and imprisonment. Well, then, may Rome, who forbids the use of the Bible, be proud of poor Brittany, and well may she be accused of its present abject state. Shut out religious light, and general darkness follows; and in darkness arise naturally evil deeds. It may startle Englishmen to know, that within a short hundred miles from their shores the Bible is systematically and actively forbidden and destroyed. But such is the fact. Within that small distance (less than separates London from Birmingham) are the two opposite systems of light and darkness in full operation—the one extending, by all possible means, the Holy Scriptures, the other denouncing them as the *works of the devil*, suppressing and *burning* them, and punishing with fine and imprisonment their distributors.'

A Roman-catholic member of the English Protestant Parliament, in defending in print the conduct of a monk who had been convicted of burning a copy of the New Testament, at Ballinrobe, Ireland, said, that 'he himself had burned the Protestant Bible, and was prepared to burn a thousand

more ! Moreover,' he added, 'it is a book put together by some of the most active friends and servants of the *fire-king* ; in other words, 'the book of the devil.'

'Within a recent period, Bibles have been torn to pieces, or burnt, at Orchard-place, London, under the auspices of Roman-Catholic priests, in the public street. The last occasion on which this occurred, was after a certain cardinal had preached in the open air to the Roman Catholics residing there.'

The recent persecution of the Madiai, of Florence, in 1851 and 1852, is universally known, and exciting the sympathy and the indignation of the whole Protestant world. Nevertheless, we cannot omit to extract a condensed record of the case from the *Times*, as it appeared in that paper of the 22nd Oct., 1852—

'The Tuscan government has succeeded in exciting the astonishment and indignation of every part of the civilized world, where bigotry and superstition have not annihilated the rights of conscience and the liberty of religious truth, by the revival in this age of that persecuting spirit which once lit the fires of Smithfield, and the *autos-da-fê* of Spain.

'The condemnation of Francesco Madiai and Rosa his wife, to upwards of four years' of brutal and infamous punishment, in the prisons of forced labour, of Volterra and Ergastolo, or female galleys at Lucca, for the offence of possessing and reading the Holy Scriptures, and the English Book of Common Prayer, is justly resented as an indignity to the faith of every Protestant nation, and an outrage on humanity and religion itself.'

## NOTE 2, PAGE 58.

‘*Queen of saints and angels.*’

## MARIOLATRY.

Is the church of Rome guilty of idolatry and blasphemy, or not? Romanists vehemently deny that she is. Let the reader of the following pages judge for himself.

Towards the close of the fourth century, there arose in Arabia, and the adjacent countries, a sect called Collyridians, or rather Collyridianæ (for Epiphanius makes them all females). They were women who carried their respect for the mother of Jesus so high, that they were justly charged, by the orthodox Fathers, with superstition and idolatry. They came from Thrace, and the yet more distant regions of Scythia, into Arabia. It was their practice to dress out a car, or a square throne spread over it a linen cloth, and on a clear day, once a year, place on it, during the day, a loaf of bread, or a cake, which they offered to the Virgin Mary. Mosheim considers them as a set of simple persons, who had considerable heathenism about them; and supposed this offering of a cake was derived from Paganism. While they were mere Pagans, they were accustomed to bake, and present to the goddess Venus, or Astarte (the moon), certain cakes, which were called Collyrides; and when they became Christians, they thought this honour might now be best shown to Mary. It is well known, that the offering of cakes in the Pagan worship was a customary thing.—Mosheim’s *Ecclesiastical History*.

‘In the fifth century, public worship everywhere assumed a form calculated for show and the gratification of the eye. The magnificence of the temples had no bounds. Splendid images were placed in them; and among these the image of the Virgin Mary, holding the infant in her arms, occu-

pied the most conspicuous place, as 'Mother of God.'\*—Mosheim.

'In the tenth century, the worship of the Virgin Mary, which had previously been extravagant, was carried much further than before. Near the close of the century, the custom became prevalent among the Latins, of celebrating masses, and abstaining from flesh on Saturdays, in honour of St. Mary, and prayers according to a numerical arrangement (or the rosary) are to be found in this century. The rosary consisted of fifteen repetitions of the Lord's prayer, and a hundred and fifty salutations of St. Mary. What the Latins call the crown of St. Mary, consisted of six or seven repetitions of the Lord's prayer, and sixty or seventy salutations, according to the age ascribed by different authors to the Holy Virgin.'—Mosheim.

Bonaventura, an acknowledged doctor of the church, and a canonised saint, lived in the thirteenth century. Pope Sixtus IV., who called him 'the Seraphic Doctor,' declared that he so wrote on divine subjects, that the Divine Spirit seemed to have spoken in him. The church of Rome, speaking through him, thus decrees: 'Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold firm the faith concerning the Virgin Mary; which, except a man keep whole and undefiled, without doubt, he shall perish everlastingly;—whom at length God took into heaven, and she sitteth on the right hand of her Son.'

The most remarkable of Bonaventura's works is the 'Psalter,' that is, an edition of the Psalms, throughout which the name of Mary is substituted for the name of God. The following are extracts:—

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\* In Rome, they show us an *image of the Virgin* which sharply reprimanded Gregory the Great, for passing by her too carelessly. A proof, no doubt, that the statue is well disposed to maintain its assumptions.—Doctor Conyers Middleton.

Psalm viii. 1. 'Oh Lady, our Lady, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens.'

Psalm xxx. 'In thee, oh Lady, have I trusted; let me not be confounded for ever. Into thy hands, oh Lady, I commit my spirit, my whole life, and my last day.'

Psalm xxxi. 'Blessed are they whose hearts love thee, oh Virgin Mary; their sins shall be mercifully blotted out by thee.'

The 'Te Deum' is also perverted by Bonaventura, thus: 'We praise thee, maker of God: we acknowledge thee, Mary the Virgin.

'All the earth doth worship thee, Spouse of the Eternal Father.

'To thee all angels and archangels, thrones and principalities, faithfully do service.

'To thee the whole angelic creation, with incessant voice, proclaim, Holy, holy, holy Mary! Parent Mother of God, and Virgin!

'Therefore, oh Empress, and our most benign Lady, by the right of a mother, command thy beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, that he vouchsafe to raise our minds from the love of earth, to heavenly desires.'

The following is an extract from a work of St. Alphonsus Liguori, a Jesuit and canonised saint, whose life has lately been written by Dr. Wiseman:—

'Mary is the Queen of the universe, as Jesus is its King. Thus (as St. Bernardine observes), as many creatures as obey God, so many obey the glorious Virgin. Everything in heaven and earth which is subject to God, is also under the empire of his holy Mother. Pity us, then, Queen of Mercy! Nothing resists your power, because the Creator of all, honours you as his mother, regarding your glory as his own. Mary owes her son an infinite debt of gratitude for choosing her as his mother; but it is not less true

to say, that Jesus Christ has contracted a species of obligation towards *her*, for the human existence he received from her; and in return for this benefit, he honours her by hearing her prayers.'

The Council of Trent declares that all mankind have lost their holiness and righteousness by the sin of Adam, *except the Virgin Mary*.—*Session 5, sect. 2.*

In several of the Romish books, prayers are addressed to the *parents* of the Virgin Mary, especially to her mother, St. Anna, who is called 'the mother of the mother of God, and the grandmother of God himself,'\* which we find too gross and blasphemous to present to our readers.

'There is a book translated into English, for the use of Roman Catholics, entitled, 'The devotion of bondage, or the practice of perfectly consecrating ourselves to the service of the blessed Virgin.'

'The Bishop of St. Omer licensed and recommended it highly, both to clergy and laity, granting several indulgences to those who should make a devout use of it. In this book, persons are urged to offer up their souls and bodies as bond-slaves to the blessed Virgin. Among her high prerogatives there recounted, this is the sixth—viz. the sovereign dominion that was given her, not over the world, *but over the Creator of the world*.† This blasphemy was probably grounded on that scandalous address to her, allowed in the church of Rome, 'By the right of a mother command thy son.'—Simpson's *Key to the Prophecies*.

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\* An abridgment of the prerogatives of St. Anna, mother of the mother of God. Approved by the doctors of the Sorbonne, at Paris. London, 1688.

† Page 32.

In the 'Book of the Scapular\* of Our Lady of Mount Carmel,' Mary is called the 'Sweet Star of the Sea,' and addressed in verse, as follows:—

'Oh! blessed and calm was the wonderful rest,  
That thou gavest thy God in thy virginal breast!  
For the heaven he left, he found heaven in thee;  
And he shines in thy shining, sweet Star of the Sea.'

In 'A Devotion to the Compassionate Heart of Mary,' we are told that 'Mary suffered during her whole life, and particularly at the foot of the cross of her divine son, excessive interior torments, for the salvation of souls.'

Dr. Cumming, when on the Continent, met with an illuminated card, which is sold in various book-shops, containing the following perversion of the Lord's Prayer:—

TO MARY.

'Our Mother who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as in heaven. Give us this day grace and mercy; give us the pardon of our sins, as we hope for Thy unbounded goodness; and suffer us not to sink under temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.'

NOTE 3, PAGE 64.

'By the canon law.'

HUMAN SACRIFICES.

One of the leading characteristics of the church of Rome is the shedding of human blood for mere matters of

\* A prominent place amongst the instances of the crafty arrogance of the Carmelites is due to the fable circulated by them respecting Simon Stock, a general of their order, who died near the beginning of the thirteenth century.

They said that the Virgin Mary appeared to him, and promised him that no person should be eternally lost, who should expire clothed in the short mantle worn on their shoulders by the Carmelites, and called 'the scapular.' This fiction, equally ridiculous and impious, has found advocates even amongst the pontiffs.—Mosheim's *Ecclesiastical History*.



opinion. To differ from that church upon any point of doctrine in religion, is adjudged by it to be a crime worthy of death. It is so decreed by law; and a sort of legal murder is thus habitually perpetrated, with as much seeming confidence of the righteousness of the act, as though it were by a law of necessity, or a law of God.

In proof of this, we cite the following passages from some of the highest Romish authorities:—

‘Experience,’ says Cardinal Bellarmine, ‘teaches us that there is no other remedy than putting heretics to death; for the church has advanced by degrees, and tried every remedy. At first she only excommunicated; then she added fines in money, then exile. At last she was obliged to have recourse to death; for heretics despise excommunication, and say that it is a *brutum fulmen* (or harmless thunder-bolt). If you threaten them with pecuniary fines, they neither fear God nor regard man, well knowing that fools will not be wanting who will believe them, and by whom they will be supported. If you throw them into prison, or send them into exile, they corrupt their neighbours by their language, and those who are at a distance by their books. Therefore, the only remedy is to send them speedily to their proper place.’

‘It is an act of kindness to obstinate heretics,’ continues Bellarmine, ‘to take them out of this life; for the longer they live the more errors they invent, the more men do they pervert, and the greater damnation do they acquire unto themselves. If they (the heretics) are stronger than we, and there is danger, if we attack them in war, that more of *us* should fall than of *them*, then we are to keep quiet.’

In a ‘Commentary’ by Menochius on Matthew xiii., 29th verse\* (a book used at Maynooth) we find the following:—

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\* The 29th verse of the 13th chapter of Matthew runs thus: ‘But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.’ (!)

*'Christ does not forbid heretics to be taken away, and put to death.'*

Saint Alphonsus Liguori says, 'If the accused (heretic) confess his crime, then sentence is to be given; if not, he is to be led to conviction, or the torture—because torture is a help to proof. But all are bound to denounce, for the same reason as above, because heresy is so noxious a pest, that it may require a severe remedy, and very easily it may tend to the common loss.'

Alphonso di Castro says, 'The last punishment of the body for heretics is death, with which we will prove, by God's assistance, heretics ought to be punished. From which words it is abundantly plain that it is not a modern invention, but that it is the ancient opinion of wise Christians, that heretics should be burned with fire.'

He continues—'We have shown already, plainly enough, as I think, that a heretic may be put to death; but in what manner, is of very little consequence. For in whatsoever way a heretic may be put to death, a nuisance is always removed, which, if alive, he may create; and terror is struck into others, so that they shall not dare to teach, or in any way speak, such things.'

'The renowned Council of Lateran has at once divested heretics of *all* their rights. To plunder such is no robbery, to kill such is no murder, to break oaths with such is no perjury.'—Bennet's *Memorial of the Reformation*.

In the beginning of the fifteenth century, indulgences were granted to those who hunted down heretics. Very many heretics were seized by the Inquisition, and delivered over to the secular authorities to be burned. The *proffer of indulgences* to those who hunted down heretics contributed much to this. Boniface VIII. had already promised an indulgence to every one who should deliver over a heretic to the Inquisition; and he ordained that this should be considered as equally meritorious with a crusade

to the Holy Land. This ordinance was renewed by the Council of Pavia, and so again at the provincial Council of Constance, in 1483.—Mosheim's *Ecclesiastical History*.

Instructions given to the Emperor Charles V. by Cardinal Campeggio, at the diet of Augsburg, 1530, respecting the reduction of Protestants to the Catholic power:—

The Cardinal remarks, that in conformity with the position he holds, and with the commission of the apostolic see, he would proceed to set forth the measures to be adopted. He reminds the emperor that this sect would not procure him any increase of power, and assures him of his own spiritual aid, in the event of his adopting his counsels. 'And I, if there should be need, will pursue them with ecclesiastical censures and penalties, omitting nothing it may be needful to do. I will deprive the benefited heretics of their benefices, and will separate them by excommunication from the church of Rome. Your highness will, with your just and awful imperial ban, subject them to such and so horrible an extermination, that either they shall be constrained to return to the holy Catholic faith, or shall be utterly ruined and despoiled, both of goods and life. And if there be any who shall obstinately persevere in their diabolical course, your majesty will then take fire and sword in hand, and will radically extirpate these noxious and venomous weeds.'—*Ranke's History of the Popes*.

One of the chief instruments of *human sacrifices* in the Romish church, has been the Inquisition. In 1542, during the progress of the Reformation, disputes had arisen in Italy concerning the sacraments, purgatory, and other matters; and Protestantism being rapidly on the increase, 'Pope Clement VII. one day inquired of Cardinal Caraffa, what remedy could be devised for these evils. The cardinal replied, that a thoroughly searching inquisition was the only one sure to be efficient. He was supported in his

opinion by John Alvarez de Toledo, of Burgos. The old Dominican Inquisition had long fallen to decay. The choice of inquisitors had been committed to the monastic orders, and it sometimes happened that these men entertained the very opinions they were appointed to suppress.

'Caraffa and Burgos were both old Dominicans, zealous for the purity of Catholicism, holding stern and gloomy views of moral rectitude. These men advised the pope to establish a supreme tribunal of inquisition in Rome, universal in its jurisdiction, and on which all others should depend. St. Peter, exclaimed Caraffa, subdued the first heresiarchs; and the successors of Peter must destroy all the heresies of the whole world in Rome. The Jesuits account it among the glories of their order, that their founder, Loyola (then about fifty years of age), supported this proposition by a special memorial. The bull was published on the 21st July, 1542. By this edict, six cardinals were invested with the right of delegating similar powers to ecclesiastics, in all such places as should seem good to them. No station or dignity was to be exempt from their authority. The suspected were at once to be thrown into prison; the guilty to be punished by loss of life, and confiscation of property. One restriction only was imposed on the power of these men. They might condemn heretics without restraint; but the right to pardon was reserved by the pope to himself.

'Caraffa lost not a moment in carrying this edict into execution. He hired a house, for immediate proceedings (though he was by no means rich), at his own expense. This he fitted up with rooms for the officers, and prisons for the accused; supplying the latter with strong bolts and locks, with dungeons, chains, blocks, and every other fearful appurtenance.

'The manuscript life of Caraffa furnishes rules drawn up by himself. He held, as a positive axiom, this rule: that in matters of faith, one must in no way pause at all; but

on the first suspicion or intimation of this plague of heresy, proceed by all force and violence to its utter extirpation. \* \* \* \*

‘In the year 1543, Caraffa decreed that no book, whatever its contents, should in future be printed, without permission from the Inquisition.

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‘The secular arm\* was called in aid of the clergy, for carrying the laws of the Inquisition into practice. Under the severity of persecution, many took to flight. Those who would not abjure their faith, and could not escape, were subject to the penalty. In Venice, they were taken beyond the Lagoons by two boats. Arrived in the open sea, a plank was laid between these, on which were placed the condemned. At the same moment, the rowers pulled in opposite directions. The plank fell. Once more did the unhappy victim invoke the name of Christ, and then the waves closed over him.

‘In Rome, the *auto-da-fé* was held formally, at certain intervals, before the church of Santa Maria alla Minerva.’—*Ranke's History of the Popes*.

‘Pagan Rome had been extremely cruel and bloodthirsty. Christian Rome has not been less so. Pagan Rome put to death an incredible number of human beings. Christian Rome hath far outdone her bloody predecessor. All the cruelties that were ever committed on the face of the earth on account of religion, are not to be compared with those of which Rome has been guilty. It has been computed, that she has put to death in various ways, at different periods, fifty millions of Protestants.’—*Simpson's Key to the Prophecies*.

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\* These secular persons were employed because many bishops, vicars, monks, and priests—nay, members of the Inquisition itself, were also heretics.—*Compendium of the Inquisitors*.

We give the following as the *secundum artem* mode of preparing an assassin for the murder of a heretic sovereign.

The Roman-catholic church directs the solemnities that are to be observed. The person designed for the work is secretly introduced into the meditory, or oratory. There, a knife, wrapped up in linen, is taken out of an ivory case, marked round with various characters, together with an *Agnus Dei*. Upon this, as it is drawn out of the sheath, they drop holy water, and hang consecrated coral beads upon the haft, granting an indulgence to the assassin, of delivering as many souls out of purgatory as he shall give wounds to the prince whom he kills. Then they put the knife into the hand of the regicide, recommending it in these words :—

‘Elect son of God, take this sword of Jephtha—the sword of Sampson—the sword of David, with which he cut off Goliath’s head—the sword of Gideon—the sword of Judith—the sword of the Maccabees—the sword of the Pope, by which he has delivered himself from the hands of princes, having spilt very much blood in their dominions. Go, and be prudently courageous. May God strengthen thy arm!’

This being done, they all fall down upon their knees, and the chief of them pronounces this invocation :—

‘Be present, ye cherubim! Be present, seraphim! ye thrones, ye powers! Be present, ye holy angels! and fill this blessed vessel with perpetual glory. Every day offer him the crown of the blessed Virgin Mary—of the holy patriarchs and martyrs! He is no longer a member of our communion, but yours. And thou, O God, who art terrible and invincible, and who, in the meditory, hast put it into his heart to destroy a tyrant and heretic, strengthen, we beseech thee, his hands, that he may accomplish his will. Give him an omnipotent mail, whereby he may escape the hands of those who would apprehend him. Give him wings, by which his holy members may escape the endea-

vours of barbarous betrayers. Pour into his soul thy cheering rays, by which his body, without fear in the midst of dangers and tortures, may be animated with joy and exultation !'

After this invocation, the regicide is brought before the altar, over which is painted the history of Jaques Clement,\* with the images of angels protecting him, and carrying him to heaven. This the Jesuits show him, and withal present him a heavenly crown, saying, 'Regard, O Lord, this thine arm, and the executor of thy justice ! Let all thy saints arise, and give him place.'

After these ceremonies, four Jesuits are deputed to talk with the regicide alone. These, during their discourse, are wont often to say, that there appears in him a divine sort of brightness, by the radiancy of which they are moved to kiss his hands and feet ; and they pretend, also, that he no longer seems to them to be a man, but a heavenly saint ;

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\* Jaques Clement, a Dominican monk of infamous character, and the murderer of Henry III. of France. Henry III., though a popish sovereign, connived at the Huguenots in his dominions, and had once extended to them liberty of conscience and of worship.

This privilege was afterwards withdrawn. But the immediate cause of his assassination was attributable to a renewed league of friendship which he had made with the heretic king of Navarre ; and also his placing himself in opposition to the pope and the Catholic league. The pope was also—as we gather from Ranke—highly irritated against Henry on account of the murder of Guise, 'a pillar of the church, a cardinal priest, and a noble member of the Holy See !' and which crime was committed, 'as the pope heavily complained, under sanction of a brief,' (or general licence,) 'previously obtained from him, which conceded to Henry the power of being absolved from *any sin whatsoever*.'

Jaques Clement became so popular after the murder of Henry, and his own immediate death, that the Jesuits placed his portrait over the altar of their churches. Pope Sixtus V., in expressing his admiration of the deed, in full consistory, exclaimed, 'Certes, this great example was given in order that all may know the force of God's judgments !' Spain's ambassador, also, said, 'that to nothing but the hand of the Almighty himself can we attribute this happy event, and it leads us to hope that it is now all over with the heretics !'

and they affect to envy him the great glory and blessedness to which he is now advanced, sighing over him, and saying, 'Would to God I had been chosen in thy room, that, being delivered from the punishment of purgatory, I might have gone directly to paradise!' But if he whom they judge proper to perpetrate the murder be backward and reluctant, then they *force* him to make such a vow, either by nightly bugbears and monstrous spectres, or they animate and introduce him to the enterprise by contriving apparitions of the Virgin Mary, or angels, or other saints, and sometimes of Ignatius and his followers.'—Bennet.

'When the messenger that carried the first intelligence of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, which took place in Paris in 1572, arrived in Rome, he received a reward of a thousand crowns. The letter he brought was read in the conclave. The churches resounded with 'Te Deum,' canons were discharged, bonfires made, and a jubilee published throughout all Christendom. A grand procession was undertaken to the church of St. Louis, where were the nobility, bishops, cardinals, several ambassadors, and the pope himself, under a canopy, his train being held up by the emperor's ambassador. The better to maintain in memory this glorious fact, the pope had it painted about his great hall in the Lateran, and there recorded in marble.'—Bennet's *Memorial of the Reformation*, 1717.

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NOTE 4, PAGE 160.

'*Equal to God, and more than God.*'

ASSUMPTIONS OF THE POPE.

The Pope, like another Salmoneus, is proud to imitate the state and thunder of the Almighty, and is styled 'Our Lord God the Pope, another God upon earth, King of kings, and Lord of lords. The same is the dominion of God and



the Pope. To believe that our Lord God the Pope might not decree as he decreed, were a matter of heresy. The power of the Pope is greater than all created power, and extends itself to things celestial, terrestrial, and infernal. The Pope doeth whatsoever he listeth, even things unlawful, and is MORE THAN GOD!

These, and the like instances, quoted in Bishop Jewel's 'Apology and Defence,' also in Downham's 'Treatise de Antichristo,' and Poole's 'English Annotations.' See, likewise, Barrow's 'Treatise of the Pope's Supremacy.'

Such blasphemies as quoted above are not only allowed, but are even approved, encouraged, and rewarded, in the writers of the church of Rome. And they are not only the extravagances of private writers, but are the language even of public decretals, and acts of councils.

In Gratian's Decretals, the Pope hath the title of God given to him.\*

'The Roman party doth pretend it very needful that controversy should be decided, and that they have a special knack of doing it.

'Yet the opinions among them concerning the Pope's authority, as they have been, so they are, and in likelihood may continue, very different.

'There are among them those who ascribe to the Pope an universal, absolute, and boundless empire, over all persons indifferently, and in all matters; conferred and settled on him by divine immutable sanction: so that all men, of whatever degree, are obliged in conscience to believe whatever he doth authoritatively dictate, and to obey whatever he doth prescribe. So that if princes themselves do refuse obedience to his will, he may excommunicate them, cashier them, depose them, extirpate them.

'If he chargeth us to hold no communion with our

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\* Bishop Newton.

prince, to renounce our allegiance to him, to abandon, oppose, and persecute him, even to death, we may, without scruple, we must, in duty, obey. If he doth interdict whole nations from the exercise of God's worship and service, they must comply therein. So that, according to their conceits, he is in effect Sovereign Lord of all the world, and superior, even in temporal or civil matters, unto all kings and princes. It is notorious that many canonists (if not most), and many divines of that party, do maintain this doctrine, affirming that all the power of Christ, '*the Lord of lords and King of kings*, to whom all power in heaven and earth doth appertain,' is imparted to the Pope as to his vicegerent. This is the doctrine which, almost four hundred years ago, Augustinus Triumphus, in his egregious work concerning ecclesiastical power, did teach, attributing to the Pope *an incomprehensible and infinite power*, because great is the Lord, and great is his power; and of his greatness there is no end.\*

Pope Pius V., in his bull of excommunication against Queen Elizabeth, began it thus:—

'He that reigneth on high, to whom is given all power in heaven and in earth, hath committed the one holy Catholic and apostolic church, *out of which there is no salvation*, to one alone on earth—viz., to Peter, prince of the apostles, and to the Roman pontiff, successor of Peter, to be governed with a plenitude of power: this one he hath constituted prince over all nations and all kingdoms, that he might pluck up, destroy, dissipate, ruin, plant, and build.'† . . . .

Dr. Burnet, in his collection of passages from the canon law, as collated by Abp. Cranmer, hath the following:

'He that acknowledges not himself to be under the

\* Barrow's *Treatise on the Supremacy of the Pope*.

† Camden's *Hist.*, A.D. 1570.

Bishop of Rome, and that the Bishop of Rome is ordained to have primacy over all the world, is a heretic; and cannot be saved; and is not of the flock of Christ. Princes' laws, if they be against the decrees and canons of the Bishop of Rome, be of no force nor strength.'

'All the decrees of the Bishop of Rome ought to be kept perpetually of every man, as God's word, spoken by the mouth of Peter; and whosoever doth not receive them, they blaspheme the Holy Ghost, and shall have no forgiveness.'

'The see of Rome hath neither spot nor wrinkle in it, nor can it err.'

'The Bishop of Rome hath authority to judge all men, and especially to discern the articles of faith, and that without any council, and may assoil them that the council hath damned.'

'The Bishop of Rome may be judged of none but God only; though he draw down with him innumerable people by heaps to hell, yet may no mortal man in this world presume to reprehend him, for *God may be judged of no man.*'

'It appertains to the Bishop of Rome to judge what oaths ought to be kept, and what not. We *obtain remission of sins*, by observing certain feasts, and certain pilgrimages in the jubilee, and other prescribed times, *by virtue of the Bishop of Rome's pardon.*'

'The Pope may change kingdoms, and take them from one to transfer them to another, as a spiritual prince, if it should be necessary for the salvation of souls.'—*Bellarmino.*

The present Pope Pius IX., on his elevation to the episcopate, addressed an encyclical letter to all patriarchs, primates, archbishops, and bishops, under date of Nov. 9th, 1846. In this document the Pope formally and solemnly asserts that '*out of the Catholic church there is no salvation!*'

## NOTE 5, PAGE 161.

*'Such a body of men.'*

## THE JESUITS.

Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Jesuit society, was born at the castle of Loyola, in the district of Guipuscoa, a province of Biscay, in Spain, in 1491. Trained up in ignorance and in vice at the court of Ferdinand and Isabella, he early became a soldier, and bravely commanded Pampeluna, when besieged by the French in 1521. Here he had his leg broken, and during a long confinement amused himself with reading romances. A Spanish legend of certain saints being put into his hands, led him to renounce the world, and become a saint.

He first visited the shrine of the Holy Virgin at Montserrat in Catalonia, hung his arms on her altar, and devoted himself to her as her knight, March 24th, 1522.

After much study, travelling, and preaching, Ignatius conceived the idea of forming a new and peculiar order of monks.

The primary object of almost all the monastic orders is to separate men from the world, and from any concern in its affairs. In the silence and solitude of the cloister, the monk is called to work out his own salvation by acts of mortification and piety. He is dead to the world (as it is said), and not permitted to mingle in its transactions. On the contrary, the company proposed by Loyola were to consider themselves as formed for action and service to society. To instruct the ignorant, and reclaim or oppose the enemies of the holy see, were to become their proper objects. They were to appear in no processions, they were to practise no rigorous austerities, but they were required to attend to all the transactions of the world. They were directed to study the dispositions of persons in high rank,

The novelty of the institution, as well as the singularity of its objects, procured the order many admirers and patrons. The governors of the society had the address to avail themselves of every circumstance in its favour, and in a short time the number as well as influence of its members increased wonderfully. Before the expiration of the sixteenth century, the Jesuits had obtained the chief direction of the education of youth in every Catholic country in Europe. They were the spiritual guides of almost every person eminent for rank or power, and they possessed the highest degree of confidence and interest with the papal court, as the most zealous and able champions for its authority. They had also become the confessors of almost all the monarchs of Europe, a function, under a weak prince, superior even to that of minister.

The advantages which an active and enterprising body of men might derive from all these circumstances are obvious. They formed the minds of men in their youth; they retained an ascendant over them in their advanced years. They mingled in all affairs. They took part in every intrigue and revolution. The general, by means of the extensive intelligence which he received, could regulate the operations of the order with the most perfect discernment, and by means of his absolute power, could carry them on with the utmost vigour and effect. Together with the power of the order, its wealth continued to increase. Various expedients were devised for eluding the obligation of the vow of poverty. The order acquired ample possessions in every Catholic country, and by the number as well as magnificence of its public buildings, together with the value of its property, moveable or real, it vied with the most opulent of the monastic fraternities.\*

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\* When Loyola died, in 1556, the number of his disciples amounted to 1000. About a hundred and fifty years after, they had augmented to the number of 19,998, and possessed 24 professed houses, 59 houses of probation, 340 residences, 612 colleges, 200 missions, and 150 seminaries and boarding schools.

Besides the sources of wealth common to all the regular clergy, the Jesuits possessed one which was peculiar to themselves. Under pretext of promoting the success of their missions, and of facilitating the support of their missionaries, they obtained a special licence from the court of Rome to trade with the nations which they laboured to convert. In consequence of this, they engaged in an extensive and lucrative commerce, both in the East and West Indies. They opened warehouses in different parts of Europe, in which they vended their commodities. Not satisfied with trade alone, they imitated the example of other commercial societies, and aimed at obtaining settlements. They accordingly acquired possession of a large and fertile province in the southern continent of America, and reigned as sovereigns over some hundred thousand subjects.

Unhappily for mankind, the vast influence which the order of Jesuits acquired by all these different means has been often exerted with the most pernicious effect. As it was for the honour and advantage of the society that its members should possess an ascendancy over persons in high rank, or of great power, the desire of acquiring and preserving such a direction of their conduct with greater facility, has led the Jesuits to propagate a system of relaxed and pliant morality, which accommodates itself to the passions of men, which tolerates their imperfections, which justifies their vices, and which authorises almost every action that the most audacious or crafty politician would wish to perpetrate.

That morality was not so much corrupted and vitiated in nearly all its parts, as *altogether subverted*, by the Jesuits, is the public complaint of innumerable writers of every class. Nor does their complaint seem groundless, since they adduce from books of the Jesuits, professedly treating of the right way of life, and especially from the writings of those called casuists, many principles which are opposed to all virtue and honesty.

They have published such tenets, concerning the duty of opposing princes who were enemies of the Catholic faith, as countenanced the most atrocious crimes, and tended to dissolve all the ties which connect subjects with their rulers.\*

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\* Parsons, the English Jesuit, 1593, amongst many other writers on the same subject, maintains that 'every Christian prince, if he has manifestly departed from the Catholic religion, and has wished to turn others from it, is immediately divested of all power and dignity, whether of divine or human right, and all his subjects are free from every obligation of the oath of allegiance to him, and they may and must (if they have the power) drive such a man from the sovereignty of Christian men, as an apostate and a heretic.' He adds, 'This true, determined, and undoubted opinion of very learned men, is perfectly conformable and agreeable to the apostolic doctrine.'

The famous Mariana, another Jesuit writer, has also contributed his quota to these regicidal doctrines. He says: 'Henry III. of France lies low, felled by the hand of a monk, with a poisoned knife driven into his stomach. A sad spectacle, which hath few equals; but it teaches kings that their impious attempts are not without punishments. But the movements of the people,' he exclaims, 'are like a torrent. Soon the tide upsurges. . . . The audacity of one youth in a short time retrieved affairs, which were almost desperate. His name was Jaques Clement, born in the obscure village of Sorbonne; he was studying theology, in the Dominican college of his order, when having been assured by the theologians whom he consulted, that a tyrant may be rightfully cut off, he departed for the camp, with the resolution of killing the king. . . . After a few words had passed between them, pretending to deliver some letters, he approached the king, concealing his poisoned knife, and inflicted on him a deep wound above the bladder. Splendid boldness of soul! Memorable exploit! By killing the king, he achieved for himself a mighty name!'—*Mariana*.

Jaques Clement had afterwards the honour of canonization for the deed, from a subsequent pope, and was ranked amongst the most highly favoured of the saints of God, for his meritorious conduct in that bloody business.—Simpson's *Key to the Prophecies*.

Ribadeneyra's notice of this detestable murder is not less significant than that of Mariana. In his work, professedly written against the principles of Machiavelli, he calls the murder of Henry III.—'a just judgment.'

Mariana, after having decided on the lawfulness of destroying a heretic

They have considered it as their peculiar function to combat the opinions, and to check the progress of the Protestants, and they have incessantly stirred up against them all the rage of ecclesiastical and civil persecution. Monks of other denominations have, indeed, ventured to teach the same pernicious doctrines, and have held opinions equally inconsistent with the order and happiness of civil society. But *they*, from reasons which are obvious, have either delivered such opinions with greater reserve, or have propagated them with less success. Whoever recollects the events which have happened in Europe in past centuries, will find that the Jesuits may justly be considered as responsible for most of the pernicious effects arising from that corrupt and dangerous casuistry, from those extravagant tenets concerning ecclesiastical power, and from that intolerant spirit which have been the disgrace of the church of Rome throughout that period, and which have brought so many calamities upon civil society.

It has been said that amongst many bad consequences flowing from the Jesuit institution, some benefits have been derived from it to mankind.

One of the principal duties of the society was to train up suitable men to be commissioned and sent by the pontiffs into the remotest regions as preachers of religion. But it soon became manifest that many of them laboured rather to promote the glory of the Roman pontiff, and the interests of their own order, than the interests of religion and morality.

It appears also from authors of high credit and authority, that the Indians in Asia were induced to profess the christianity proposed to them, by the tortures of the inquisition established at Goa; and by their arms and penal laws,

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sovereign, enters into a cool discussion respecting the mode of regicide assassination, from which may be inferred, that the assassin is at liberty to adapt it to his own convenience, and the circumstances of his intended victim.



rather than by their exhortations and reasonings. In Paraguay, where it is well known they had extensive missionary settlements, they acquired a dominion which enabled them to rule as kings, and to accumulate immense wealth.

Their oppressive domination in many countries, though supported by innumerable miraculous frauds, at length reached its term, and their European royal patrons having become jealous of their wealth, confiscated it. Various other causes, which had been long in silent operation, tended also to undermine their order. Their acknowledged code of morals had become so depraved, as to teach rather how to commit sin safely and successfully, than to avoid or resist it.

Spain, Portugal, France, successively proscribed them. Finally, Pope Clement XIV. reluctantly issued a bull, on the 21st July, 1773, in the following words:—‘Inspired as we trust by the Divine Spirit; impelled by the duty of restoring concord to the church; convinced that the Society of Jesus can no longer effect those purposes for which it was founded; and moved by other reasons of prudence and state policy, which we retain concealed in our own breast, we do extirpate and abolish the Society of Jesus, its offices, houses, and institutions.

‘It is a fact of the highest moment, that the papal see could not succeed in upholding an order which had been founded for the purpose of opposing the Protestants, and that a pope deprived it of existence by an act of his unbiassed will. It was for the conflict with the Protestants that the institute was originally calculated. But that conflict was now at an end. The non-catholic countries of Europe had acquired an undeniable superiority in the great political relations of the world; and the Catholic states were now rather seeking an approximation to the Protestant potentates, than hoping to draw the latter within their own pale. And herein lay the principal and most profound reason for the pope’s suppression of the order.

‘After the society had been suppressed about forty-one

years, and after several attempts to re-establish it, pope Pius VII. issued a bull, in August 1814, solemnly re-establishing the society as a religious order, under the constitutions of St. Ignatius, and under obedience to the general chosen by it, to be employed in educating youth. . . . Pius commenced his favours towards them by restoring to them their house of the 'Gesù,' and afterwards the Roman College. The Jesuits have colleges now, also, in the Sardinian states, in Modena, and in the kingdom of the two Sicilies, and likewise at Freyberg in Switzerland, where they have a fine college, attended by pupils from France and other countries. In France, they had re-introduced themselves in a clandestine manner after the Restoration, upon which a great outcry was raised, and they were finally expelled in 1830.

'In Spain, Ferdinand restored them. But since that time, the legislature has suppressed all monastic institutions in Spain.

'George IV., in an act for the relief of his Majesty's Roman-catholic subjects, forbids Jesuits, or members of other religious orders, communities, or societies of the church of Rome, bound by monastic or religious vows, from coming into the realm, under pain of being banished from it for life; except natural-born subjects who were out of the realm at the time of the passing of the act. Such religious persons may, however, enter the United Kingdom on obtaining a licence from one of the principal secretaries of state, who is a Protestant, and may stay such time as such secretary may permit, not exceeding six months. The act also makes it a misdemeanor in any Jesuit, or member of other religious body described in the act, to admit, or to aid in, or consent to, the admission of any person within the United Kingdom to be a member of such body. And any person admitted or becoming a Jesuit, or member of other such body, within the United Kingdom, shall, upon conviction, be banished from the United Kingdom for life.'

[The foregoing brief sketch is drawn from the writings

of various authors, chiefly from those of Robertson the historian, Mosheim's *Ecclesiastical History*, and Ranke's *History of the Popes*.—EDITOR.]

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NOTE 6, PAGE 163.

*'False gods and graven images.'*

SAINT, IMAGE, AND RELIC WORSHIP.

During the seventh century, as in several of the preceding centuries, true religion lay buried under a senseless mass of superstitions, and was unable to raise her head. Amongst other apostasies from the faith of the early Christians was that of Mariolatry and the worship of images, which began in the fourth century. The first of these idolatries is traceable to the agency of women, as related in Note 2.

The worship of images (after the most violent controversies respecting it betwixt the pope, Hadrian I., and the emperor, Leo IV., which were carried to such a height as eventually to lead to civil war) was, after the death of the emperor, decided on, in a council assembled at Nice in Bithynia, in the year 786. In this council, the worship of images was not only sanctioned, but rendered coercive, and penalties were decreed against those who should maintain, that *worship and adoration were to be given only to God*.

The early Christians had worshipped only the God of the Scriptures; but those called Christians in this century, worshipped the wood of a cross, the images of holy men, and bones of a dubious origin. We find in the life of St. Eligius, bishop of Noyon, the following passage, well calculated to illustrate the piety of this age: 'The Lord conferred (it is said) upon this most holy man, among other miraculous gifts, that, while searching and praying after them with the most ardent faith, the bodies of the holy

martyrs, which had lain concealed for so many ages, were discovered.

‘This most successful carcass-hunter of saints, discovered the bodies of Quintin, Plato, Crispin, Crispinian, Lucian, and many others, as his biographer minutely narrates. Such ability to find the concealed bones of saints and martyrs was claimed by most of the bishops, who wished to be esteemed by the people, and to amass riches. . . .

‘In the tenth century, the most important doctrines of Christianity were misunderstood and perverted. The essence of religion was supposed to consist in the worship of images, in honouring departed saints, in searching for and preserving sacred relics, and in heaping riches upon the priests and monks. Scarcely an individual ventured to approach God, without first duly propitiating the images and the saints.\*

‘Saints and images, as mediators, having thus become greatly in request, may probably have been the cause of that transformation of Pagan gods and goddesses into saints,† which seems to have obtained to so great an extent in Rome for many centuries.

‘It is at least undeniable, that many of the ceremonies of the Romish religion (as Dr. Conyers Middleton, in his celebrated letter from Rome, asserts) were copied from the rituals of primitive Paganism, as if handed down by an uninterrupted succession from the priests of old, to the priests of new Rome; ‘so that as oft as I was present (he says) at any religious exercise in their churches, it was more natural to fancy myself looking on at some solemn

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\* Mosheim.

† The Roman pontiff, who had previously begun to assume to himself the right of making new saints, gave the first specimen of the actual exercise of this power in this century. At least, no example of an earlier date is extant. It should be here remarked, that before the year 994, prayers to the saints and to the Virgin Mary are not mentioned in the canons of the English churches.

act of idolatry in Pagan Rome, than assisting at a worship instituted on the principles, and formed upon the plan of Christianity.

‘Many of our divines have, with much learning and solid reasoning, charged the crime of idolatry on the church of Rome, and effectually proved it; but these controversies are not capable of giving that conviction which is received from the senses, and which no man can fail to be furnished with, who sees popery as it is exercised in Italy, in the full pomp and display of its pageantry, and practising all its arts and powers without caution or reserve. Our notion of the idolatry of modern Rome will be heightened and confirmed, if we follow them into those temples, and approach those altars, which were built originally by their heathen ancestors to the honour of their pagan deities. We shall hardly find any other difference betwixt the pagan and the Christian deities, than that of the shrine of some old hero being filled by the meaner statue of a modern saint. They have sometimes been content to take up with the old image just as they found it, after baptising it, as it were, by the imposition of a Christian name. It was, I think, in the church of St. Agnes, where I was shown an antique statue of a young Bacchus, which, with a new name and some little change of drapery, stands now, and is worshipped under the title of a female saint.

‘The noblest heathen temple now remaining in the world, is the Pantheon, or Rotunda; which having been impiously dedicated of old by Agrippa, to Jove and all the gods, was piously re-consecrated by Pope Boniface IV., to the Blessed Virgin and all the saints. And what better title can the new demigods show to the adoration now paid to them, than could the old ones, whose shrines they have usurped? Or how comes it to be less criminal to worship images erected by the pope, than those which Agrippa, or that which Nebuchadnezzar set up?

‘If there be any real difference, most people, I dare say,

will be apt to determine in favour of the old statues; for they represented heroes of antiquity who had been raised up into gods, and received divine honours for some signal benefits to mankind, of which they had been the authors. Whereas, of the Christian saints that have usurped their places, it is certain that many of them were never heard of but in popish legends or fabulous histories; and many of them, instead of any services to mankind, owe all the honours paid to them to their vices or their errors; whose merit, like that of 'Demetrius,' was their skill in raising rebellions in defence of an idol, and throwing kingdoms into convulsions for the sake of some gainful imposture. Tertullian reproached the heathen (*for even among pagans, the worship of idols was deemed abominable and impious, by some of their wisest men*) that their streets, their baths, their markets, were not without an idol. And now, as in ancient Rome, in every house, every temple, every town, and in every village—'on every high hill, and under every green tree'—images, rural shrines, lamps, candles, and votive offerings, remind us that we are still treading on pagan ground.'

'In all parts of Italy are images that have been dropped from the clouds by angels; and in one of their churches is a picture of the Virgin presented by celestial hands to Pope John I.; who, accompanied by his clergy, marched in solemn procession to receive this miraculous gift: (as of yore, the pagan Numa and his priests marched out from Rome, to receive from heaven the miraculous shield.) These fables are but counterparts to the ancient inventions of the image of Diana that dropped from heaven, or the Palladium of Troy, which we are told was a wooden statue three cubits long, which fell from the clouds.

'The pretended preservation too, of the rod of Moses, what is it, but an imitation of that relating to the rod of Romulus, with which he performed his auguries, and which was preserved as a relic, by the priests of old Rome?

‘Modern, as ancient Rome, abounds in speaking, weeping, and bleeding images. Does not Livy tell us of the image of Apollo, that wept for three days and nights, on the approach of some public calamity—and of the images in the temple of Juno, which sweat large drops of blood? And has not Catholic Rome, a church dedicated to a Madonna famous for weeping?—and an image of the Saviour, which, previous to the sacking of Rome, shed so many tears, that the good fathers were constantly employed in wiping them away, with cotton?’

‘Behold the many altars in every church, from which rises the smoke of incense, as from the hundred altars decked with garlands in the temple of the Paphian Venus!’

‘The use of holy water—now, as then—composed of salt and water—the perpetual burning of lamps and candles at their numerous shrines—and the votive offerings of jewels and pictures glittering on them, in memory of miraculous cures, performed by the idols, as in the church of our Lady of Loretto, which is become a proverb for its riches, in the same manner as was Apollo’s temple at Delphi.

‘These are but a few of the multiplied instances of resemblance betwixt the externals of Pagan and Catholic worship.’  
—*Dr. Conyers Middleton.*

The Rev. Mr. Seymour speaking of the relics still exhibited and worshipped in Rome, in the middle of this, our nineteenth century, says:—

‘I have handled the rod of Moses, I have looked on Aaron’s rod that budded; I have seen the brazen serpent\* that Moses made; I have held in my hand the stone

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\* It is worthy of remark, that we have a record in the 18th chapter of the 2nd book of Kings, 4th verse, respecting this brazen serpent, in the following words: Hezekiah (who lived seven hundred and twenty-six years before Christ) ‘removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made; for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it; and he called it Nehushtan’—that is, a piece of brass.

that killed Stephen ; I have seen pieces of the true cross, and the transverse beam of the cross of the repentant thief ; I have seen the nails that pierced the hands, and the spear that pierced the side, of the Redeemer ; I have seen and handled some thousands of the teeth, and pieces of the bones, and parings of nails, and locks of the hair of apostles, martyrs, and saints.

‘I have seen the people bow and prostrate themselves before them, with every outward act of devotion and adoration ; though I believe in my soul they are the grossest frauds, and vilest impostures, that ever disgraced or cursed the world.’

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NOTE 7, PAGE 187. (*See also* NOTE 3.)

*‘Your life, so long forfeited.’*

#### ASSUMED JURISDICTION OVER HERETICS.

‘It is an unquestionable doctrine of the Roman-catholic Church that it never surrenders its asserted jurisdiction over any heretic, who has once been baptized. That it insists on its right to the indefeasible allegiance of baptized infidels, heretics, apostates, and schismatics ; and to compel them to return to the Roman-catholic faith, and fulfil the obligation which by baptism they have contracted. The existence of this pretended right was deliberately asserted, in the year 1842, by a Jesuit theological professor in the College of Rome, in a letter addressed to the Dr. Newman who recently apostatized from our church to that of Rome.’  
—Samuel Warren, Esq., *The Queen or the Pope*.

‘Heresy deprives sovereigns, and subjects too, of their rights, claims, and enjoyments, and leaves those that are charged with it to the mercy of Roman Catholics, who by Divine right become lords over them and all they enjoy.’ So says the famous Lateran Council. ‘The goods of heretics are ipso facto and immediately confiscated. They have no further right to them.’



NOTE 8, PAGE 281.—*'Awaiting its victims.'*

#### THE INQUISITION.

'In examining the history of the Inquisition, under its various forms, two things ought to be carefully distinguished, the principle and the practice of that remarkable institution.

'The fundamental principle of the Inquisition is, that heresy, that is to say, dissent from the tenets of the Romish church, is a heinous crime, and liable to both temporal and spiritual punishment. This principle, however, is not peculiar to the Inquisition; it is that also of the canon law, and it has the countenance of the Roman law in several constitutions of the early Christian emperors. In every country, therefore, in which the canon law has civil or ecclesiastical force, the principle subsists, although it may lie dormant.\* A subject of such a country, who should openly dissent from the established church, is liable to prosecution, either by the episcopal or the secular courts. This is still the case in several states of Italy, and even in Spain and Portugal, under their new constitutional governments, at least until a new code shall be enacted. It must not be forgotten that the Inquisition was established in Spain while the cortes of Arragon and Castille were still in full vigour. It is not long since that the minister of justice stated, in the Spanish cortes, that laws were still in force by which persons dying in a state of heresy cannot bequeath their property. It is not, therefore, sufficient for the Inquisition to be abolished in a country, in order to insure liberty of conscience; it is not even sufficient for this purpose to establish a representative or republican government, as long as the canon law

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\* Has the canon law been rendered applicable to England since the introduction of the Catholic hierarchy? and is it only *biding its time*?

remains in force, and the majority of the people do not tolerate dissent.'—*Penny Cyclopædia*.

'The Inquisition, after having fallen for some time into disuse, was re-established at Rome, in 1540, by Pope Clement VII., during the period of the Reformation, with the especial object of arresting its progress ; and as there was at that time no lack of heretics, the tribunal was immediately brought into active operation. 'Any person became suspected of heresy who misused the sacraments, or treated the images with disrespect ; or if he possessed, read, or gave to others to read, books prohibited by the Inquisition. He was equally amenable if he attended, even but once, the preaching of heretics ; or if he did not appear before the Inquisition as soon as he was cited ; if he showed any kindness to a heretic, or aided him in making his escape.

'When the Inquisition discovered a transgressor of their laws, the offender was cited three times to appear before them, and if he did not appear he was forthwith condemned. This court had its spies, and a thousand concealed ways for getting a heretic into its power. When once in their hands, no one dared to inquire after him, or write to him, or intercede for him ; and when once everything belonging to the person seized was in their hands, then the process of trial began, and was protracted in the most tedious manner, after days or months had already been spent in a loathsome dungeon. The accused was then brought out before his judges, who, as if they knew nothing about him, asked him who he was, and what he wanted. If he wished to be informed what offence he had committed, he was admonished to confession. If he confessed nothing, he was remanded to prison.

'If, after a long time allowed him, he still confessed nothing, he must swear to answer truly to all the questions put to him. If he would not swear, he was condemned without further proof. If he swore to give answer, he was ques-

tioned in regard to his whole life, without making known to him his offence. The accuser and informer against him were not made known to him, but at last the charges against him were presented to him in writing, and counsel was assigned to him, who, however, only advised him to confess fully his faults. If his answers did not satisfy the judges, or if the allegations against him were not adequately proved, resort was had to the torture, which well nigh exceeded the sufferings endured by the first Christians, when persecuted by the pagans.

‘The hall of torture was a vaulted room under ground, or so placed in the centre of the prison of the Inquisition that the screams of the victims might not be heard without. The forms of torture to which the holy office subjected its prisoners were various.’

‘By rope, by water, and by fire. The rope was passed under the arms, which were tied behind the back of the accused. By this rope he was drawn up into the air with a pulley, and there left to swing for a time, and then suddenly let fall to within half a foot of the ground, by the shock of which fall all his joints were dislocated. If he still confessed nothing, the torture by water was tried. After making him drink a great quantity of water, he was laid upon a hollow bench, across the middle of this bench a stick of timber passed, which kept the body of the victim suspended, and caused him most intense pain in the backbone. The most cruel torture was that by fire, in which, his feet, being smeared with grease, &c., were directed towards a hot fire, and the soles of them left to burn, until the feet were not unfrequently literally roasted, until he would confess. Each of these tortures was continued, as long as in the judgment of the physician of the Inquisition, the man was able to endure them. If when tortured he confessed nothing, many snares were laid for him to elicit unconsciously his offence. The conclusion was, that when he seemed to have satisfied the judges, he was condemned,

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according to the measure of what appeared to be his offence, either to death, perpetual imprisonment, the galleys, or scourging.

‘In the latter case he was delivered over to the civil authorities, who were entreated to spare his life, *as the church never thirsted for blood*. But yet these authorities experienced persecution if they did not carry the intentions of the court into full execution. The inquisitorial judges do not deny that by such proceedings many innocent persons unavoidably perish along with the guilty. But this does not trouble them. Better, say they, that a hundred innocent, persons who are good Catholics, should be cut off and go to Paradise, than to let *one* heretic escape.’—Drawn from *Mosheim*.

That the old spirit of the Inquisition still enters essentially into Romanism, is evident from the vestiges of torture and death found in the prisons of the Holy Office, when thrown open during the late revolution in Rome.

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NOTE 9, PAGE 288. (See NOTE 10.)

‘*He cursed me in the name of the Holy Trinity.*’

END OF VOL. I.







